

# Disability NOW

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# DDA shows Wisdom teeth

A factory worker, who was sacked for not meeting her quota, has become the first person to win an employment case under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Barbara Tarling, 48, of Haverhill in Suffolk, won £1,200 in compensation at an industrial tribunal and has been reinstated by her employers, Wisdom Toothbrushes.

Mrs Tarling made toothbrushes for the company for 18 years, operating machines while standing.

But in the last two years, she had taken more time off work and was not able to cope with her usual workload because of a gall stone operation, her club foot and arthritis in her hips and knees.

She was finally dismissed in January because of "poor performance". She took Wisdom to an industrial tribunal in May, with the backing of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

It decided Mrs Tarling had been discriminated against under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and that she had been unfairly dismissed.

Mrs Tarling told DN: "I was getting worse and worse and so I finally registered disabled in July last year. That is when all hell broke loose. My bosses would not accept it and continued to put pressure on me to meet my quotas.

"I now have amendments in my contract and a new job which specifies I must be seated for 80 per cent of the day".

But she is now facing discrimination from some colleagues.

"I went on a victory march round the factory. Some were very pleased to see me, some gave me strange looks. Now I

am working again, there is a very cold atmosphere. I have to put up with a few jibes, people calling me 'peg leg'. But I don't let it bother me.

"This whole thing was terrible but other disabled people need to see that somebody's won."

Manufacturing director of Wisdom Toothbrushes, Mike Rudge, said: "Under the DDA it was found that we discriminated against Mrs Tarling. We have reinstated her and altered her contract."

Neil Betteridge, head of projects and campaigns at the Royal Association of Disability and Rehabilitation said: "This sends a very positive message to disabled people that they do have some employment protection."

But Anne Pridmore, vice chair of the British Council of Disabled People, was not convinced. She said: "It doesn't prove that the DDA works. The fact that she won is probably due to the fact that she had a union behind her."



Brush with success: A jubilant Barbara Tarling

WENDY TURNER

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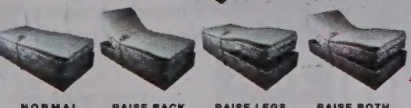
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# Care Bill faces axe

The Government is allowing local authorities to deny care, despite evidence that elderly people are bearing the brunt of social services cut-backs.

It voiced objections to Lord Ashley of Stoke's private members' Bill to amend the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

If passed, the Bill will reverse a Law Lords' decision in April which allowed Gloucestershire County Council to take its resources into account when assessing someone's needs.

At the second reading of the Bill in July, the Government claimed it would lead to increased costs and cut-backs in services to children at risk.

A new report from the Association of Directors of Social Ser-

vices has highlighted cuts of £214 million a year. It shows that authorities are cutting services for adults and particularly elderly people in order to protect services for children.

Baroness Gould of Potternewton said: "Unfortunately we do not live in a world where resources can be ignored. In recognising that fact, the Government have embarked on a far-reaching review of spending priorities."

Lord Ashley dismissed the claims on spending. He said: "Instead of expressing vague generalities about thinking, considering, and assessing the matter in the future, they should tell us what they intend to do."

However the Government is backing another private mem-

bers' Bill to reverse a judgement allowing Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council to charge for residential care until a resident's savings fall below £1,500 (DN, May).

• The Office of Fair Trading has launched a probe into Britain's 17,000 care homes for elderly people amid fears of malpractice.

## Happy returns

The Time and Tide boat finished the ten-month round-the-world race in July, coming last out of the 14 boats which took part, but sailing into the record books as the first all-disabled crew to complete the 300,000 mile feat.



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## Stop press

### Victory for MS man

The High Court has ruled that North Derbyshire Health Authority must review its decision to refuse a man's expensive beta interferon drug.

Kenneth Fisher, from Dronfield, who has multiple sclerosis, was initially refused the drug – the only one which has a real effect on the condition.

The authority now has to reassess Mr Fisher as he has deteriorated since the dispute began 18 months ago.

### Disability pioneers

The first ever meeting of editors of disability publications was held in Madrid in July.

Funded by Fundación ONCE, the largest disability charity in Spain, and organised by Servimedia, a unique news agency serving the charity and disability fields, the conference tackled common problems of production and marketing.

DN's editor Mary Wilkinson, the only non-Spanish editor there, said: "I was honoured to be invited to talk about DN and other UK publications. Perhaps the net can be spread wider one day to include editors from all the European community."

### DN on the web

You can read *Disability Now* on the Internet. Our address is [www.disabilitynow.org.uk](http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk)

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# Disability show on line

Radio Four's disability programme, *Does He Take Sugar?* could be axed in the latest round of cuts at the BBC station, according to *The Sunday Times*.

Station controller, James Boyle, has decided to make changes to programme schedules after a six-month consulta-

tion with broadcasting groups.

The programme review was expected to come up before the BBC Board of Governors as DN went to press, although proposals had already been provisionally approved by the corporation.

A spokeswoman for the BBC told DN: "The plans are still

under review and they don't become official policy until the Governors have approved them at the end of this month."

Presenter on the *In Touch* programme, Peter White, said: "I have heard nothing and as far as I know neither have my colleagues in special programming."

## Council on the case

A public campaign to raise awareness of disability issues and more powers to combat discrimination are needed, according to the National Disability Council (NDC).

Its annual report calls for the Government to fulfil its manifesto commitment to comprehensive, enforceable civil rights legislation as soon as possible.

Chairman David Grayson said the NDC would help ministers achieve the commitment quickly.

"I hope as soon as possible there will be a body which can

build on the work the NDC has done and which can do even more for disabled people."

Mr Grayson said a poll of leading professionals found 66 per cent were not aware that people with severe facial disfigurements (a group specified in the Disability Discrimination Act) were disabled.

"You need to keep raising awareness of the issue of disability and you can't just have one burst of advertising and assume everybody knows what their rights and obligations are."

## Tale of needless death

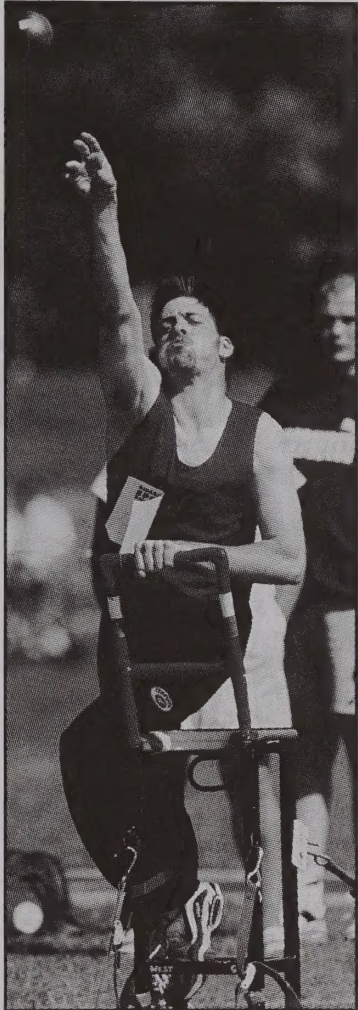
The death of a mentally ill man who stabbed his mother to death before killing himself, was preventable, an independent inquiry has decided.

Its report condemns agencies in the Croydon Health Authority and the Bethlem and Maudsley NHS Trust for failing to communicate.

Gilbert Kopernik-Steckel and his mother Suzanne died in January 1996 even though he had

been willing to enter hospital voluntarily. Mayday Hospital in Croydon failed to detain him and he then committed the murder.

Marjorie Wallace, chief executive of the mental health charity SANE, said: "Inquiry after inquiry shows that lessons have not been learned and that new measures are vital to ensure immediate care and treatment for those who need it when they need it."

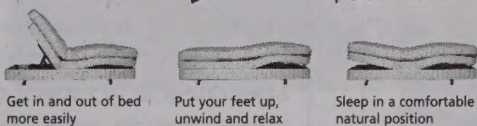


Hot shot: Daniel West, 19, from Cambridge, makes an 8.93m shot put throw at the Disability Sports England Junior Athletics in Blackpool.

GRAHAM BOOL

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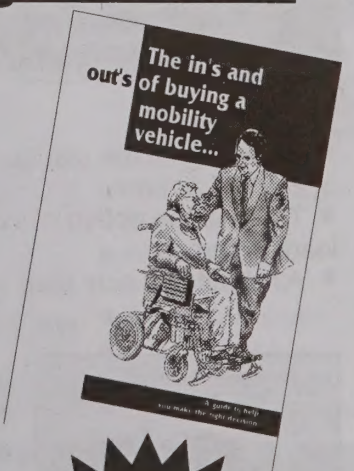
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DN08



## Bottomley takes chair

Conservative MP Peter Bottomley has been elected co-chair of the All Party Disablement Group (APDG).



Mr Bottomley was proposed by fellow co-chair Jack Ashley. He replaces former Conservative MP, John Hannam, who stood down at the last election.

Mr Bottomley told DN: "I suspect one of the reasons they asked me to [become chair] was because I used to go to some of the meetings of the APDG in the last Parliament. In the mid-eighties I was also responsible for disability issues in my role as Minister for Employment.

"My job is to be helpful, to build bridges and provide a link with Parliament to help it to understand what those closest to the campaign are saying."

## Not appealing

Benefit claimants will lose the automatic right to appeal under new proposals to be laid before Parliament. Social Security Secretary, Harriet Harman, said claimants with no valid claim would be struck out as soon as they complained, to reduce the 20,000 "pointless appeals" which clog up the system annually.



Good sign: A policewoman chats to a deaf protestor in sign language at the first mass rally by disabled people of the new Government. Hundreds of disabled people and their supporters lobbied the House of Commons in July, calling on MPs to bring in comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation.

The disability rights consortium, Rights Now, organised the rally to bring the failings of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to the attention of newly-elected MPs.

Dr Roger Berry, who has put forward a Private Members' Bill calling for a Disability Rights Commission, said: "If there are difficulties and nothing has happened before January next year I shall invite the Government to support my bill."

The loudest applause went to the MP for Aberdeen South, wheelchair user Ann Begg. She said: "I am looking forward to the time when there will be no need for a Minister for Disabled People. We will be part and parcel of society."

BRENT MOORE

# Housing rule is reversed

Government plans to cut housing benefit for people over 25 (DN, May) have been reversed.

The decision means thousands of disabled people living in private rented accommodation who faced having their benefit reduced to the equivalent of rent on a single room, can now breathe a sigh of relief.

The legislation, planned under the Conservatives, would have brought the housing benefit rules for those over 25 in line with existing laws for under 25s.

Disability and housing groups lobbied the Government to try to get the rules changed as many disabled people faced moving into unsuitable or inaccessible, shared accommodation to cut costs.

Social Security Secretary, Harriet Harman, announced in

June: "Without a thorough review of the effect of the existing Single Room Rent rules, the Government should not extend them."

Christine Macleod, of the Brent Association of Disabled People, organised a petition objecting to the rules. She told DN: "The Government is saying they will now review the under-25s rule and we are hoping that they will reverse that too."

Margaret Lavery, social security spokesperson at the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, said: "We are now concerned about other rent cuts the Government might make."

A spokesman for the Department of Social Security said it was embarking on a much wider review of housing benefit.

## Backing work

Disabled people will get £200 million in the next five years to pay for training and finding work, as part of the Government's new deal.

The £3.5 billion Welfare to Work programme announced in July will allow many disabled people to join the workforce.

Under the programme, a quarter of a million young job seekers will be guaranteed a choice

of four work-or-training options. Disabled young people without a job will not have to have spent the statutory six months unemployed to qualify.

Over 25s who have been unemployed for at least two years will be levered back into the labour market with a subsidy to employers, but it has not yet been decided how disabled people will fit into the plans.

## ACCESSIBLE SHARAN

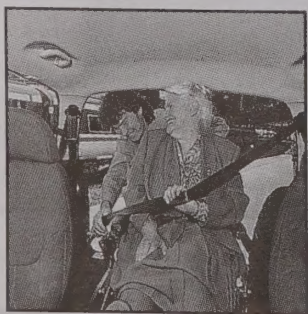
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# Cannabis debate is lighting up

Cannabis products could be available on prescription if the Government bows to pressure from the British Medical Association (BMA).

Last month, doctors at its annual conference in Edinburgh called for a change in the law to allow drugs derived from cannabis to be made available for medical use.

These drugs could be prescribed to relieve symptoms of conditions such as cerebral

palsy, multiple sclerosis, glaucoma, epilepsy, asthma and spinal cord injury.

The BMA is due to publish a report on the issue in October.

Many disabled people use the illegal drug, including Clare Hodges, organiser of the Alliance for Cannabis Therapeutics (ACT), who has multiple sclerosis. She said substitutes, some of which were already available, could be inadequate.

"We want to see natural cannabis available now. It is stressful being ill and it is also stressful breaking the law.

"A lot of patients tell us that their doctors are supportive or indeed suggest that they try it."

Anne Rae, chair of the British Council of Disabled People, has cerebral palsy and personally advocates legalisation. "I find it extremely effective in pain control and spasm control. Any other drugs which might help

have side-effects and are not acceptable to me.

"It is outrageous that we have to break the law. It is also wrong that we have to feel so guilty about it and that we are put so out of pocket. It is also saddening to me that disabled people do not have access to people who could obtain it for them."

But Peter Cardy, chief executive of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, was not in favour, as some people have reported side-

effects. "We are very surprised that doctors should be advocating wider use of substances derived from cannabis before convincing scientific trials have taken place."

*Disability Now* is keen to know of readers' experiences. Please fill in and return the questionnaire below before 31 August, so we can report what you think and want.

## Doctors angry at TV killing

Doctors have condemned the Channel 4 soap *Brookside* for showing a character with bone cancer being smothered by her daughter.

The July episode showed the mercy killing of Gladys Charlton by daughter Elaine and son-in-law Mick Johnson, (right) after she had endured months of pain.

Dr John Ellershaw, of Marie Curie Cancer Care, said: "There is no reason why a GP should not be aware of how to treat a patient whose pain was not being controlled."

But Rachel Hurst, chair of Rights Now, who opposes euthanasia, said many doctors were failing to provide adequate medication.

Meanwhile, the British Medical Association (BMA) has voted to oppose legalising euthanasia and assisted suicide "for the time being".

Dr Jane Orr, from Surrey, argued at the BMA's annual conference in Edinburgh that bad deaths occurred because of bad medicine.



## Extraordinary

Mainstream schools across England are including more disabled pupils, according to the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

In *A Trend Towards Inclusion*, it reports the special school population fell to 88,849 or 1.4 per cent of all 5-15 year olds in 1996 – it was 1.45 per cent in 1994.

From 1992-1996, 71 out of 107 local education authorities reduced the number of disabled pupils in special schools.

### Correction

From *DN's* July issue: It has been pointed out that the words ballpoint pen should have been used in Rob Jackson's Naidex report, not Biro, which is a trade mark.

## DN CANNABIS SURVEY

AGE ..... MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐

DISABILITY .....

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IF YES, HOW DOES IT HELP YOU? .....

DOES YOUR DOCTOR KNOW/APPROVE? .....

DO YOU SUPPORT LEGALISING CANNABIS FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES? .....

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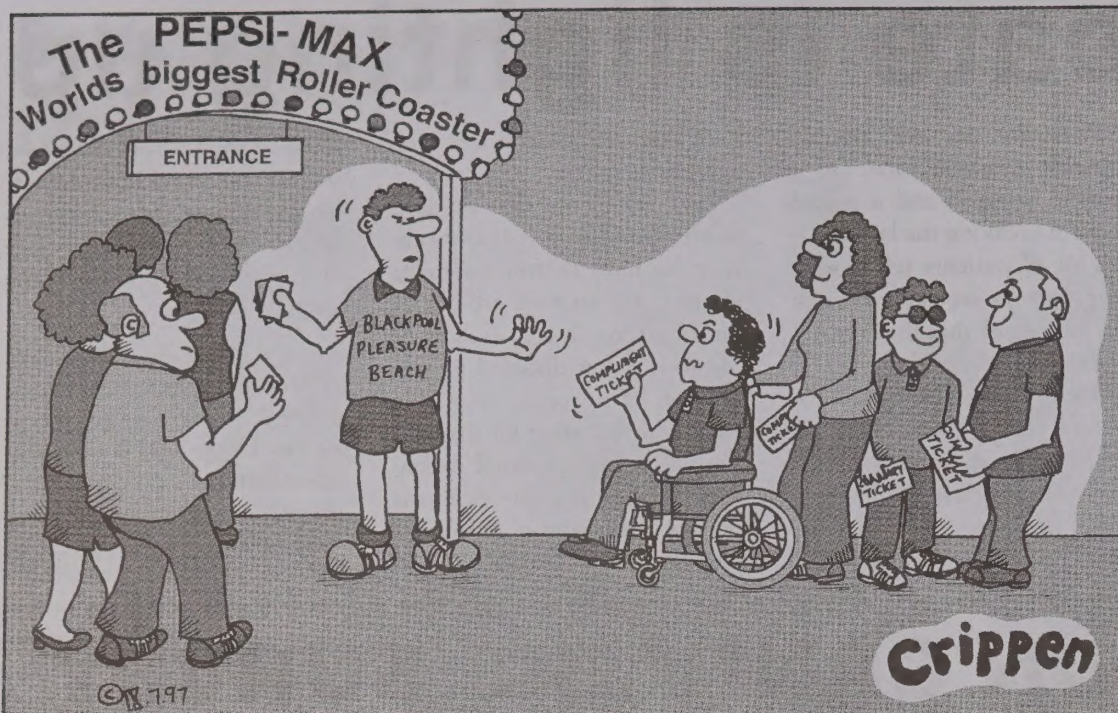
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## No pleasure in free rides

A group of disabled people were refused entry to the Big One roller coaster – despite trying to use the tickets they were given as compensation for the last time they were turned away.

The 40-strong Stepping Stone group from Sheffield were guests of Blackpool Pleasure Beach, but were so incensed that they could not use the Pepsi Max ride on their return visit,

that they barricaded the entrance for half an hour.

The Pleasure Beach had treated the group to a free weekend to make up for being turned away from white-knuckle rides when the park was too busy last year (DN, December).

Youth worker Roger Simmons said: "The treatment we got on the allocated day was fine, but

when we went back the next day, we were told they could not cater for us. Disabled people should not have to accept inferior treatment such as coming at off-peak times."

A Pleasure Beach spokesperson said: "The total cost to us was £2,680. We are a user-friendly park – unfortunately it is impossible to please everybody all the time."

## RNID backs chief

A vote of no confidence in the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) trustees has failed to win support from members of the charity.

The vote was proposed by RNID member, Maggie Woolley at an extraordinary general meeting at the RNID last month, after a long running row among some members over the leadership of the charity.

It followed the departure of RNID's first deaf and sign language-using chief executive, Doug Alker, in March. Mr Alker was replaced by James Strachan who is profoundly

deaf but lip reads. Supporters of British Sign Language saw the appointment of a non-signer as an affront to deaf people who use sign language.

Ms Woolley said: "The result of the vote reflects that of the RNID membership. I feel that the institute has learned from these events, and that the membership is by no means passive but expects its elected representatives to deliver nothing but the best."

Chairman David Livermore said: "I hope we can now put this behind us and all work for a brave new future."

## Glenda's trip tip

A new book giving advice to disabled people on bus and coach travel has been launched by the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT).

Access '97 gives information on useful local and national contacts to help travellers make arrangements.

Speaking at the launch of the book at the Mobility Roadshow in July, Transport Minister Glenda Jackson said: "It is important because it is going to be an annual publication."

Ms Jackson also received a £10,000 cheque from Help the Aged for the Community Transport Association to help fund an advice line on buying adapted minibuses.

On the subject of making public transport accessible under the Disability Discrimination Act, Ms Jackson said: "I don't want to pretend to anybody we can achieve this overnight but the move has certainly begun."

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BRITISH MADE



# Polling booths still out of bounds

Polling stations are still out of bounds to disabled people, often preventing them from voting, a Scope survey has revealed.

The charity's *Polls Apart 2* found 94 per cent of polling stations presented at least one access problem and 81 per cent had two or more problems. This meant tens of thousands of disabled people could not vote in person and millions of others

had difficulties. Obstacles included steps, broken pavements, bad lighting and ballot boxes out of reach.

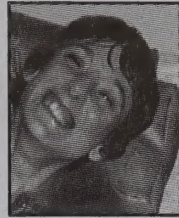
Scope's study, of 1,272 polling stations in 50 constituencies, found Cambridge was one of the best constituencies with 42 per cent of accessible polling stations. The Isle of Wight was one of the worst.

The first Polls Apart survey in 1992 looked at 846 polling sta-

tions in 50 constituencies and found only 12 per cent were fully accessible.

Julie Pearson, 30, (above) a wheelchair user from Rotherham, used a postal vote in the election because of problems in 1992.

She told DN: "At the last election I had to be carried up some



stairs and I was put in a separate room to everyone else.

"I could not go into the polling booth so I had to mark my ballot paper and then an official took it away so I didn't see it go into the box. I felt this was very unfair. This time I had to post my vote because my carer told me the polling station was not accessible this time either."

Scope's assistant director of

campaigns and public policy, Brian Lamb, said: "Voting is a fundamental civil right. A powerful spotlight has been thrown on barriers to access.

"The 1997 findings point to a substantial amount of goodwill, but little effective action. This is essential if disabled people are not to be disenfranchised. The survey indicates that postal votes are not considered an acceptable solution."

## Baby death mum vows to fight on

A mother has promised to fight for the parental right to choose treatment after a judge ruled that doctors were right not to resuscitate her premature baby.

Kirsty Cassidy, 23, is threatening to take her case to the European court to strengthen parents' rights in the delivery room, after her daughter Rebecca was allowed to die.

A four-day fatal accident enquiry at Kilmarnock Sheriff Court, heard that Rebecca died weighing only 1lb 4oz.

Dr Faisal al-Zidgali, a paediatrician at Ayresshire Central Hospital, told the court he had judged Rebecca "non-viable", and that any attempt to resuscitate her might have punctured her lungs.

The court agreed that he had been right not to attempt to revive Rebecca.

## Data on line

A database of children and young people with disabilities has been launched in Manchester to help plan council and health services in the city.

The database known as MAP (Manchester Multi-Agency Partnership) was put together by Manchester City Council and the Mancunian Community NHS Trust.

Families whose children are on the system will get information about services, benefits and support groups relevant to their disability.

## Opening up

Disabled countryside lovers should benefit from the launch of a new guide from BT, *The Countryside for All: Standards and Guidelines*, which outlines ideas to open up the countryside to disabled people. £25, tel: 0114-270 1668.



Speaking out: Dawn Cowley, a member of Hounslow Borough Association of Disabled People, and Mayo Marriott, a member of the executive committee of Sheltered Housing for Disabled People, add to the debate at the recent annual general meeting of Hounslow Council's Disability Community Forum – the first for the newly formed body.

HOUNSLOW COUNCIL

## Abuse inquiry will go ahead

A local authority has bowed to Government pressure for an independent inquiry into abuse of people with learning disabilities at two privately run residential homes.

Buckinghamshire County Council has given way to pressure from health minister Paul Boateng for the inquiry into physical and sexual abuse during a ten-year period at two homes run by Longcare in Stoke Poges.

Former co-owner of the homes, Angela Rowe, was jailed for two-and-a-half years in June, for ill-treating residents. Her husband, Gordon, who was said to have sexually abused and raped residents, committed suicide the day before he was due to be charged by police.

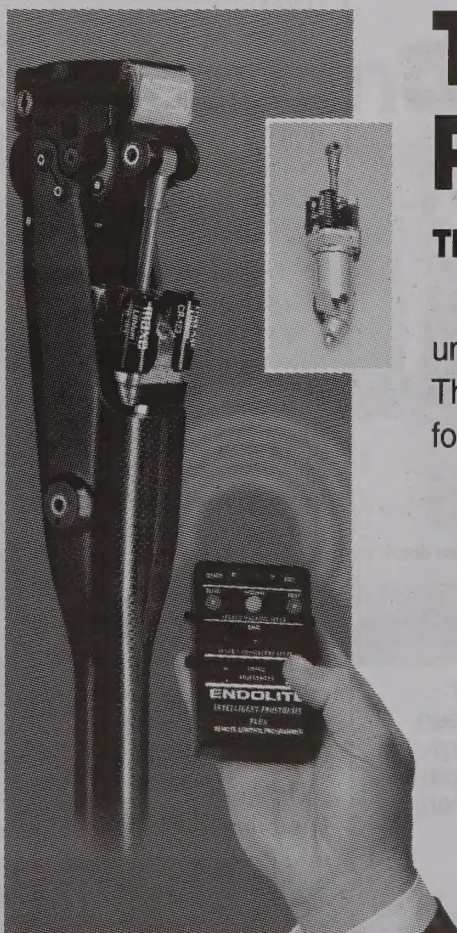
Another staff member was jailed, and another fined.

Mr Boateng was concerned at the council's regulation system and its failure to cancel the company's registration once the abuse was discovered.

Relatives of the victims have formed a group called Justice for Longcare Survivors and want compensation.

Pauline Hennessey, whose sister Janet was allegedly raped by Rowe, said: "We are delighted. It is too late for the victims of Longcare but we need to learn the lessons for the better protection of other adults with learning disabilities."

Janet died at Christmas but her sister hopes to use any compensation to set up a holiday home for abuse survivors.



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ENDOLITE



# DLA check-up goes further

The mother of a 29-year-old man with cerebral palsy who was awarded Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for life is angry that her son is being re-assessed.

Under the Benefits Integrity Project, 442,000 disabled people will receive questionnaires or visits from the Department of Social Security (DSS) during the next few months in a bid to cut fraud (*DN, July*).

Violet Tallett, from Kent, received a 34-page DLA 250 questionnaire for her son, Simon, even though he was told five years ago he would not have his care needs re-assessed.

Mrs Tallett said: "It has come as a real shock to us. This will take hours to complete and puts more emotional strain on the person with disabilities as

well as their carer."

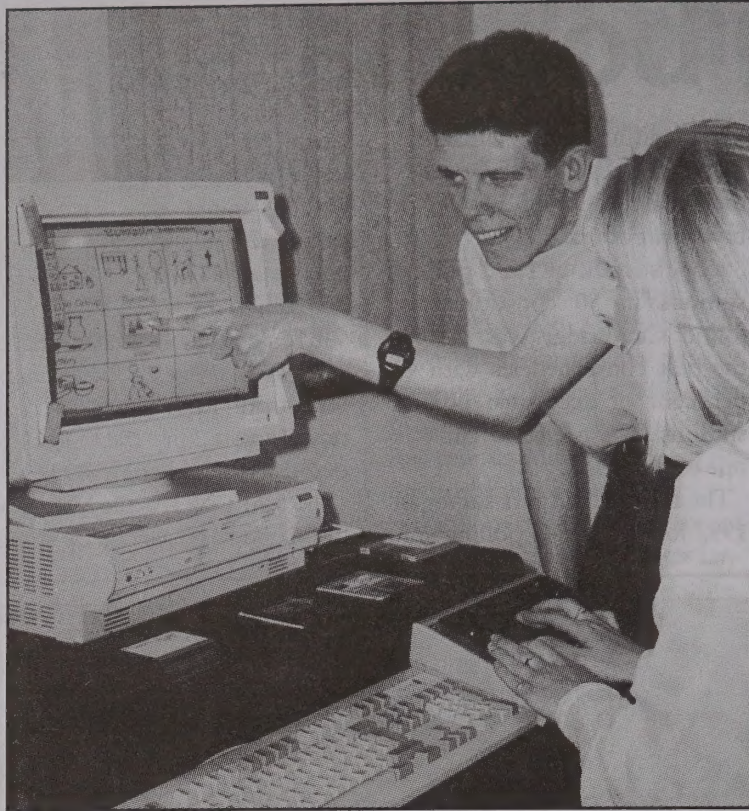
A DSS spokesman said the questionnaire was a way of keeping in contact with those who had been given life awards.

Royal Association of Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) social security officer, Margaret Lavery, said: "It is bad news that they are including people on life awards."

Carers' National Association spokesperson, Jill Harrison, said they were advising people to get professional guidance if they were worried.

The Disability Alliance, tel: 0171-247 8776 and RADAR, tel: 0171-250 3222 are offering advice on the subject.

• Social Security Secretary, Harriet Harman, announced last month that Incapacity Benefit was also to be reviewed.



A symbolic effort: Stuart Henson, from the Borehamwood Day Centre in Hertfordshire, checks out the Getting Started with Symbols computer pack with Anna Priestner. Stuart and other people with learning difficulties helped to create the pack which was devised by Sally Paveley of the Advisory Unit of Computers in Education. Ms Paveley said: "My project set out to explore how symbols might help people gain greater independence, and the pack includes how to make the most of symbols." £20, tel: (01707) 266714.

## In brief

### Station celebration

The first winners of the Disability and Radio awards organised by Scope were presented by Heritage Secretary Chris Smith at the KPMG Commercial Radio Awards ceremony in June.

Lincs FM won the best individual project category and Talk Radio was awarded the prize for best individual project, for Disability '97.

The awards were set up to encourage and celebrate efforts made by commercial radio stations to meet the needs and highlight the concerns of disabled listeners.

• The next programmes in the Disability '97 schedule are on 25 July 7-9pm and 4 August 4-7pm.

### More cabs on call

Deaf people in London can now use a new Minicom line to book black cabs from the Dial-a-Cab firm, which has trained staff and put Minicom in its control room.

Tel: 0171-608 0213

### Show on the move

Naidex Care Management will move from the Birmingham National Exhibition Centre (NEC) to London's Earls Court next year.

Organisers said the exhibition, from 23-25 June, was moving because some southern-based visitors could not get to the NEC.

### Student success

Cambridge University's first blind student has gained a top class honours degree at Trinity College, and one of the highest firsts overall.

Nikhil Nair, 21, will return in the autumn to begin a research degree in quantum chemistry, using revised lecture notes from a computer which has a Braille synthesiser and voice box.

### Scope in the league

Scope has joined the top ten of fund-raising charities.

The Charities Aid Foundation put the organisation at number ten, with £37,237,000 raised through voluntary income by the end of the last financial year.

Oxfam is the highest earner, knocking the National Trust off the top spot.

### Get into the net

Disabled football fans are getting their say on the facilities and services at football grounds, through a survey on the Internet. The National Disability Council has set up the site on [http://www.open.gov.uk/ndc/fb\\_survey.htm](http://www.open.gov.uk/ndc/fb_survey.htm)

## School fees

A High Court decision in July forced Solihull Council to fund four-year-old James Finn, who is autistic, to go to the Higashi school in Boston. Mr Justice Dyson ruled the school was the most appropriate place for James and the council will now have to pay £56,000 a year.

## Doctors reject fees

The British Medical Association (BMA) has rejected proposals to extend the patient charges being considered by Chancellor Gordon Brown.

Means-testing pensioners' free prescriptions and asking patients to pay for visiting the doctor are being looked at by

the Government in a bid to save money and avert a crisis in the NHS (*DN, July*).

The BMA said an extra £1 billion a year was needed for the next five years if the NHS was to provide a full range of treatments, but it decided to look for other sources of finance.

## Insurance firms have no excuse

Insurance companies will no longer be able to discriminate against disabled people after the Insurance Ombudsman Bureau announced it would consider complaints under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

At its AGM in June, bureau members agreed to include cases of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, sex and disability.

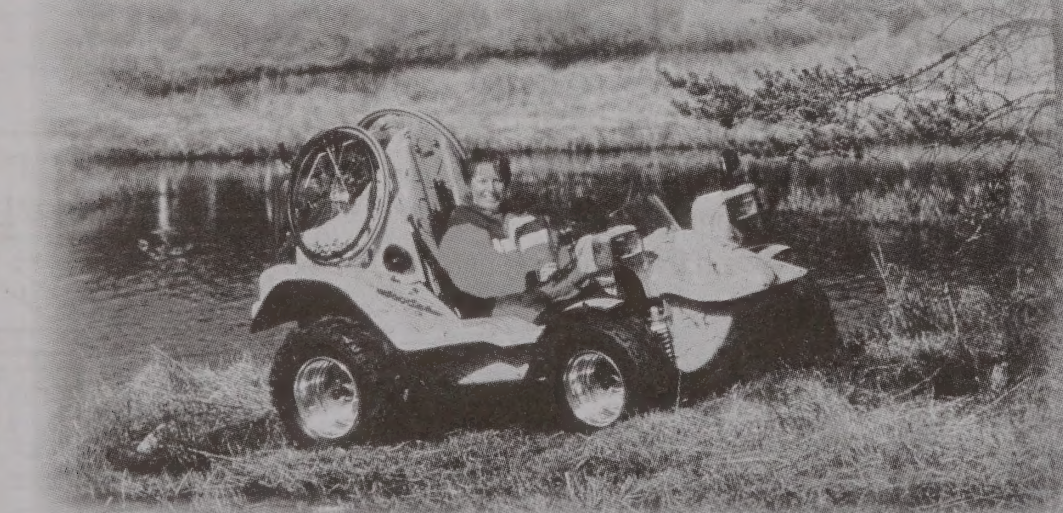
Under the DDA, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled people when providing goods, services or facilities.

Now, anyone who feels they have been treated unfairly by an insurance company can take their case to the Insurance Ombudsman. Decisions will be binding on the insurer.

Spokesman for the Insurance Ombudsman, Walter Merricks, said: "Although I do not expect a large number of complaints to come into the bureau as a result of this change, I do believe it will offer an important service to disabled people."

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation said it was an important step in establishing equal rights. Legal spokesperson Samantha Fathergill told *DN*: "This can only be a good thing for disabled people as an alternative to expensive and often lengthy litigation through the courts."

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**Hanging out:** Artists with learning disabilities show off their work at Mencap's 32nd International Art Exhibition in June.

Hundreds of entries for the charity's competition were sent in from all over the world and judged by artist Tony Hart and *Antiques Roadshow* presenter David Battie.

The 100 winners were put on show at Phillips Fine Art Auctioneers, in London.

Mencap chairman Lord Rix said: "I am delighted that the art exhibition has proved to be an important showcase for genuinely talented artists."

"The quality of entries amazes us every year."

LISA WOOLLETT



## Magistrates equal in eyes of the law

Blind people can now become lay magistrates in an experimental move by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg.

People with sight or hearing loss have always been excluded from the magistracy, but the Lord Chancellor said attitudes towards disabled peoples' abilities had now changed.

He said: "Those who are blind from birth, or from their early years, do seem to have an enhanced ability to hear, and to draw conclusions from their aural sense as those who are lucky enough to be sighted."

The Lord Chancellor said if the experiment was successful, he would consider encouraging blind people to become magistrates on a permanent basis.

It is hoped six blind people will be appointed in the next 12 months.

Solicitor and former chairperson of the Law Society Group of Solicitors with Disabilities, Elizabeth Marshall, said: "We have been campaigning for some time on behalf of people with disabilities who want to be magistrates or jurors and I am pleased the Lord Chancellor has made this decision."

## Making room

The Hoteliers' Forum will hold talks with the hospitality industry's leading trade organisations, recruitment and training agencies, in a bid to boost the number of disabled people being recruited by the industry.

At its symposium in June, delegates heard that in the last year, 30 per cent of the hotels owned by Hoteliers' Forum members had been accredited under the Tourism For All national accessible scheme, which recognises accessible premises.

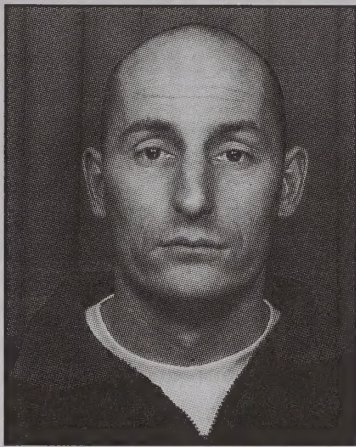
## Spark of pension hope

Hearing impaired ex-servicemen who are denied war pensions by the Government have been urged to sue the Ministry of Defence for compensation.

In a landmark out-of-court settlement which could cost the Government millions, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) agreed to pay £80,000 in compensation to James Nicholls, a former lance corporal in the parachute regiment.

His hearing was injured during training exercises. He could not wear ear protectors while ammunition was being fired because he was using a radio.

The Royal British Legion is calling on ex-servicemen with hearing loss to sue the MoD if they can prove the damage occurred due to peace-time negligence.



Compensated: James Nicholls

It may help people who cannot claim a pension under rules introduced by the Conservative Government, which stipulate they must have lost 20 per cent of their hearing while in service. These rules prevent people

whose hearing subsequently deteriorates from claiming, and they are now under review.

Tom House, head of pensions at the Royal British Legion, said: "You cannot get a war disablement pension for under 20 per cent hearing loss, but if you can prove negligence we would encourage people to go down this route"

People who qualified for pensions could also claim compensation, he said.

Mr Nicholls, of Essex, who was discharged from the army in 1992 and works as a lorry driver earning £150 a week, said: "The MoD is responsible for its employees."

"When you are not at war you expect a certain amount of protection."

## QC Cherie in Halifax let-down

A local authority has black-listed the Halifax after the PM's wife and top lawyer Cherie Booth advised it could not be taken to court for denying windfall shares to people with learning disabilities.

Halifax awarded £18 billion worth of shares to account holders when it was floated on the stock market in May.

Cheshire County Council hired Ms Booth, hoping to bring a case against the Halifax on behalf of 66 people in its care. They had been denied handouts worth £1,500 because rules say only the first named person on an account can get shares.

Many had their accounts under the name of their social services team leader, to whom only one payment could be made.

Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council, part of Cheshire, has decided to sever financial ties with the Halifax.

Councillor Steve Roberts, chairman of corporate services, said: "Although there is no legal redress for these people, we believe we should make some statement about their appalling treatment. So from now on we shall be striking the Halifax from the list of authorised organisations with which we have investment dealings."

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## Asthma vaccine on course

A vaccine which could prevent allergic asthma and hayfever could be on the market within three years.

Scientists at the University of Southampton are carrying out clinical trials of the vaccine made from mycobacterium vaci, an organism found in soil.

The usefulness of the vaccine was discovered in research into tuberculosis (TB) where it was found that a balance of special cells, Th1 and Th2 cytokines, were needed in the body to protect against certain bacteria.

In people who experience

allergic reactions, more Th2 type are produced, which creates an imbalance and promotes an allergic response.

Dr Radco Djukanovic, a senior medical lecturer at Southampton, said: "By promoting Th1 cytokines through this vaccine, we hope to reduce the Th2 type response and the allergic reaction."

Twenty four people aged 18-55 will be involved in the asthma trials at Southampton General Hospital which begin this month.

They will be given the vaccine and then exposed to allergy producing substances such as dust or fur. The drug's effect on limiting the allergic reaction will be measured.

Another study for people with hayfever is being carried out at Oxford University.



**Sharp end:** A futuristic new device which administers needle-free injections could be on the market in the next three years. Clinical trials of the 3 inch, hand-held PowerJect System are already underway. The medical tool uses helium to push solid drug particles through the skin at the rate of 1,700 miles per hour.

## Cancer treatment over used

New evidence has shown that up to a third of children with the most common form of childhood leukaemia (acute lymphoblastic leukaemia) are being over treated, leading to complications and long term side effects.

Scientists at the University of Newcastle said the "better to be safe than sorry" approach meant some of Britain's 450 children diagnosed with leukaemia each year were developing brain damage, growth disorders and other cancers as a result of intensive drug treatment.

Now the Leukaemia Research

Fund (LRF) has invested over £500,000 to fund a five year study at the university into why some children respond better than others to chemotherapy.

The study will also try to find ways of identifying those who need less aggressive treatments and will investigate the causes of drug resistance.

Dr Andy Hall, who will lead the investigation, said: "We have evidence that as many as half of all children would have been cured using less toxic regimes and it is these children that this work will target."

Scientific director of the LRF, Dr David Grant, said: "There is still a lot of work to be done in evaluating this therapy in patients but the potential of Dr Hall's research programme is very exciting."

## Sheep in CF trials

A flock of cloned sheep are being used in research to improve control over the genetic lung disease, cystic fibrosis (CF).

Fragments of human DNA were inserted into sheep embryos and these were then used for in-vitro fertilisation.

The pregnant sheep produced a protein in their milk, normally obtained from human blood. It is believed the purified drug form of the protein, transgenic alpha-antitrypsin (TgAAT) will help reduce inflammation of the lungs, which can lead to further infection and eventually lung failure.

TgAAT has already been successfully tested in 40 healthy volunteers. Now it will be given to 12 male patients with CF at Papworth Hospital, Cambridge.

Manufacturers of the drug, PPL Therapeutics at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, believe this is the first time the Medical Control Agency has approved clinical trials of a transgenic product.

Director of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, Dr Martin Scott, said: "Most CF patients die from lung damage caused by inflammation."

"AAT has the potential of controlling or preventing this and for the first time we have sufficient material to see if our hopes for AAT as a treatment for CF will be borne out – an exciting development for the CF community."

# A

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## Dementia gene find

A genetic cause for late onset Alzheimer's disease has been identified by a team of scientists at universities in Newcastle and Belfast.

In a study of 128 patients, the team found common variants of a gene involved in the immune system called Human Leucocyte Antigen or HLA-DR, were connected with a major risk of the disease. The gene seems to be linked to an inflammatory response in the brains of people with the disease.

The results may herald more genetic screening of those at risk and selective treatment with anti-inflammatory drugs prior to the onset of symptoms.

The scientists are now involved in a larger study to confirm their findings. They will also carry out clinical trials into the effects of anti-inflammatory drugs in patients in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.



# Mr Smith is listening...

Helen Gregory finds Andrew Smith is positive about getting rid of negatives

"Channel your anger into constructive dialogue, because this Government is listening."

The new Minister for Employment and Equal Opportunities is earnest in his offer of a friendly ear and urges people to write in with suggestions and complaints.

Only a couple months into his new job, Andrew Smith says he has already been thinking "what would most readily and quickly make a practical difference to people in their everyday lives". And with his earnest, no-flannel manner, it looks like he means it.

An Oxford graduate and former education and member relations officer at the Oxford and Swindon Co-op Society, Mr Smith, 46, has been MP for Oxford East for ten years, and a local councillor for the previous 11 years.

He is married to Val who is also a local councillor, has one stepson, and gardens in his spare time.

So why was he chosen for the job?

"You'll have to ask Tony Blair," he laughs. "I'd like to think it's because I was seen as someone who would be energetic in getting things done. Not simply for disability issues, but employment issues generally.

"I'd also like to think I've got the empathy and the sensitivity towards people's needs."

His contact and experience with disabled people seems limited, apart from being patron of the Pathway Sheltered Workshop and joint patron of the ACE (Aids to Communication) centre in Oxford.

But he has strong beliefs and says he finds the disproportionate level of unemployed disabled people the most unjust aspect of society.

"Frankly, exclusion from anything on the grounds of disability makes me pretty angry. I feel passionate about it and that is one of the great things about my job, to help build a society where everyone has the chance to make the most of their potential. It's very rewarding and energising."

Mr Smith will need all his energy. Looking slightly weary, he admits he has been in the office since 8am and is likely to be there until 2am the next morning.

He believes the "healthy tradition of direct action" has a role to play, but hopes that because

the Government has pledged to make the democratic process work, the energy which protesters use in chaining themselves to railings will go into constructive discussion instead.

"To make progress on disability rights is not just a dialogue between the Government and disability organisations; it is a far wider conversation between disabled people themselves and the general public.

**"I'd like to think I've got the empathy and the sensitivity towards people's needs."**

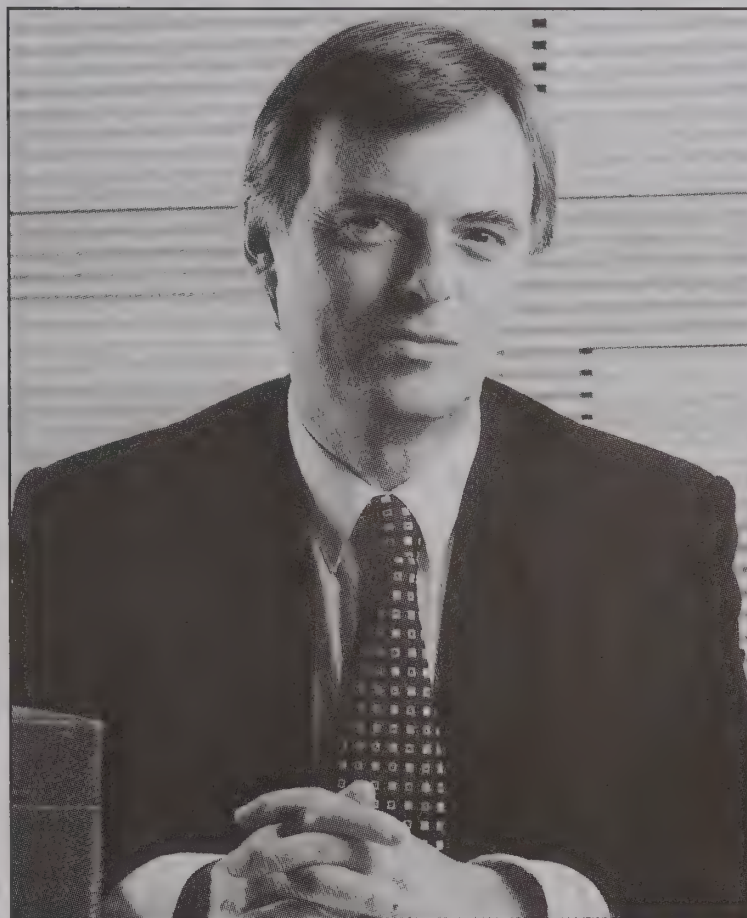
"Direct action can win publicity, but is it always winning people to your cause?"

However, he appreciates the reason for their disruption. Mr Smith thinks hard, but cannot think of anything the last Government did well.

The Conservatives worked in good faith, he says, but he labels manoeuvring, particularly the sabotage of private members' bills, as disgraceful.

"Even the Disability Discrimination Act, although it was progress, does not go far enough."

He promises that disabled people will be involved in the consultation process for a Disability Rights Commission and



Write on: Andrew Smith wants to hear from disabled people DEE

comprehensive civil rights.

"The Government is committed to legislating to put human rights into British law so that it will be possible to get redress under the UK judicial system.

"We haven't taken any decision on a Human Rights Commission. I'm very concerned that the wider issues on human rights shouldn't impede progress on the appropriate body to carry forward disability rights."

He stresses how little time the Labour party has been in government, but that already good progress has been made.

"The new deal is an important step forward, with £195 million to help people with disabilities into jobs. And the Amsterdam treaty gives clear grounds for action against discrimination on grounds of disability."

Mr Smith thinks the enormous change in public attitudes in

recent years means he is "pushing at an open door". Belief that most people want to see an integrated and inclusive society with disabled people making the most of their potential drives him on.

"Integration is an education. People are becoming less fearful about disabled people and although there's a long way to go, I believe we can do it."

He is positive about the moving of his post from the social security department to employment department. "I see it as symbolic of a shift from disabled people as recipients of benefit, towards people with full potential for education and employment.

"I believe employers will increasingly accept disabled people into the workplace. And we want to make further and faster progress with employers."

Although he believes benefits are still vital, Mr Smith defends the proposed clampdown on benefit fraud.

"The potential level of incorrect benefit is one that no government could ignore.

"I don't see why disabled people should be treated any differently from anybody else and I don't think most of them do either."

• Write to Andrew Smith at the Department for Employment, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

## It's Blackpool, it's November, it must be ... All Round Ability



**All Round Ability is an independent exhibition to accompany Scope's National Conference – *Disability, a Shared Agenda?* – to be held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool on 7 & 8 November 1997.**

**The Conference will be addressed by influential speakers in the disability field, and will include seminars and workshops on a range of topics from the future of Community Care and the National Health Service to disabled people's access to sport, education and the media.**

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### Who should visit?

- Disabled people
- Families and carers
- Professionals
- Employers
- Representatives of local authorities
- Voluntary organisations
- Charities working with disabled people
- Purchasers of equipment for centres
- The media

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## Stations set for facelift

Disabled rail travellers should find their journey gets a little easier over the next year thanks to a new access drive by Railtrack.

The company plans to spend £4 million improving facilities for disabled people at key railway stations around the country.

Passenger business director, Brian Burdsall, said: "Many of our stations were built when the needs of disabled people were not considered. We intend to put this right."

The Centre for Accessible Environments is helping with some of the access audits at the 200 stations, and chief executive Sarah Langton-Lockton said: "It's very commendable that Railtrack are looking in such detail at each station."

"We are pleased to be involved."

# Hope for sick veterans

ME-like symptoms such as aching joints, headaches and tiredness experienced by Gulf War veterans are to be investigated in a £2.5 million research programme.

Minister for the Armed Forces, Dr John Reid, announced the new policy which will look into the causes of Gulf War Syndrome and provide a 20-point plan of practical

help for the sick veterans.

He said: "We have a duty of responsibility to those who have served their country. We will ensure that Gulf veterans have prompt access to medical advice, that appropriate research is carried out and that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) will make any relevant information available to the public".

The research programme will look at the health effects of the combination of vaccines and tablets given to troops in the Gulf to protect them against biological weapons.

Veterans will also be able to sue the MOD for negligence although no extra money will be given for financial compensation beyond the present "no-fault war pensions".

This has not dampened the spirits of the veterans themselves. Tony Flint, of the National Gulf Veterans and Families Association, said: "I feel great relief that someone is at last listening to us".

At least 1,285 Gulf veterans have applied for pensions – 295 of these relate to symptoms arising from undiagnosed illness.

## Home start

Years of fundraising paid off for DN's counsellor Lin Berwick and supporters of the Lin Berwick Trust when the holiday home, Berwick Cottage, was opened in July by *Today* presenter Sue MacGregor. They had raised £150,000 to build and furnish the fully accessible cottage in East Harling.



Teddy came too: Children with special needs enjoy a picnic at Battersea Park in London as part of National Carers' Week in June, organised by the charities Contact a Family and Carers' National Association.

## Camelot highlights disability

Three of the first six charitable project grants just announced by the Camelot Foundation help disabled or elderly people.

The Spinal Injuries Association gets £96,000 over two years for nine new support groups at regional spinal injury units. Revolving Doors gets £174,000 for three projects putting people with mental health problems in touch with community support agencies, while the Dark Horse Venture will use its £50,000 for an arts pilot scheme to help elderly people in the North break through their isolation. (See page 30.)

The Foundation, set up last year with £5 million of the Camelot Group's profits, also has a small grants programme which has so far given £1.26 million to 759 applicants, and operates a "give as you earn" programme for the group's 600 employees.

It aims to support organisations helping disabled and disadvantaged people to play a fuller part in the workplace and community.

Director Aletheia Gentle said: "It is unusual in the sector to have direct conversations with fundraisers, for them to be heard. We want to help."

*The Camelot Foundation, 1 Derry Street, London W8 5HY, tel: 0171-937 5594.*

## Short changed

Money belonging to people with learning difficulties is often spent without their agreement, or used to force them to do things against their will, according to a report by Values Into Action.

*Money Matters* lists recommendations for major changes in legal practice, benefit regulations, services and family practice to prevent the abuse.

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# Coming up with the goods

As armchair shopping becomes a reality, Suzanne Cox discovers how supermarkets might make life easier

For disabled people, the difficulties of getting groceries home are a major barrier to independence.

Most supermarkets are fairly accessible now, but top shelves can still prove impossible for wheelchair users and a large-scale busy store can be tiring for

be able to use this high-tech shopping method, as Sainsbury's is keen to extend the service to any Internet users living near stores offering the Order and Collect scheme.

It envisages charging £5 for home delivery when the service becomes available nearer the

mentary addition to their weekly visit to a Tesco store."

Safeway is trying to lighten the shopping load with Collect & Go, giving customers a personalised shopping list, based on previous purchases.

They can then order by phone or fax and, at a cost of £2, have Collect & Go staff carry it out to their car when they arrive.

Marketing director Roger Partington says: "We want to improve the overall shopping

Other chains seem less keen to follow this lead.

At some stores in London and Edinburgh, Marks and Spencer staff will deliver shopping to your home once you have selected and paid for it. You pay £5 a time and there are no plans to expand the arrangement.

Asda and the Co-op do not have any home shopping schemes, but individual stores will do what they can on a one-off or short-term basis, especially

None of the supermarkets had disabled people in mind when they set up their scheme but, according to the Disability Discrimination Act, these service providers have to make extra help and services available so that disabled customers can get access.

Phone or write to the customer services department of your local supermarket and tell them what you need.

Isn't the store which comes up



Selling well: Tesco Direct allows customers to order their shopping over the phone, have it picked up by trained staff, and delivered to their door – at £5 a time

TESCO

anyone with mobility problems.

Some weary shoppers now long for a return of the personal service which local high street shops used to pride themselves on.

The major chains are cottoning on to this and have recently started to offer at least one type of home shopping alternative.

But the bias is mostly towards London-based, mobile customers who can afford the additional charges which most shops make.

Sainsbury's is piloting an Order and Collect service at its Solihull and Watford branches. This is aimed at business people and the store says 95 per cent of people using it are working mothers.

A staff member helps the customer to compile a personal catalogue to order from over the telephone. The "personal shoppers" take the goods from the shelves and store them until you arrive to pay.

You have to collect your shopping from the customer service desk. The handling charge is £2.

Sainsbury's plans to extend the scheme to further stores during the year and is now trying out home delivery to the Order and Collect customers at its Solihull store.

The chain is also testing an electronic shop with Hewlett Packard.

About 100 of the computer firm's staff order food on the Internet which the store says they have found convenient.

Other customers might soon

end of the year.

A Sainsbury's spokesman says: "While we don't believe the Internet is the answer to most people's shopping needs, we do know that around 20 per cent of our customers are interested in some form of 'surrogate shopping'.

Tesco has had the same idea as its competitor, and if you live in one of five areas around the country, you can order your shopping through Tesco Direct, a scheme which delivers to your door.

Trained "shoppers" pick out the purchases and refrigerated vans call round to your house.

The store launched the scheme last November and now club-card members in Ealing, Hammersmith, Lea Valley, Romford, Sutton and Leeds can order by telephone or fax from a printed catalogue or by e-mail from a CD ROM catalogue, which is also on the Internet. At least 20,000 products are available on the Internet Explorer 3 site.

It costs £5 every time you use the service and food can be delivered the next day or at any time in the following 28 days.

Tesco does not have figures on how many people are using the scheme, but says it has had a good response.

Tesco Direct Internet consultant, Paul Arnold, says: "It's not about shifting the emphasis from stores to shopping from home, it's about giving people an option.

"We have yet to learn if this service will be an alternative to some customers, or a comple-

experience, so customers don't have to worry about pushing a heavy trolley around."

The scheme is only being tested by 400 customers at the Basingstoke store. A second will start in Sutton this summer.

for long-standing customers.

With supermarkets competing for shoppers, continued pressure from customers should surely result in packing, selection and delivery services becoming much more widely available.

with the goods, before being forced to by law, more likely to get your customer loyalty?

Tesco, tel: (0345) 225533

Sainsbury's, tel: 0171-921 6000

Safeway, tel: 0181-848 8744

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# Speed to success

(4) Lisa Hitchen explores ways of getting to the top through fast track work schemes

Only 12 per cent of disabled people are in management jobs compared with 21 per cent of non-disabled people, according to the Leadership Consortium (an employment project initiated by the Prince of Wales Advisory Group on Disability). Even so, 93 per cent of employers rate their disabled workers as performing as well as or better than their non-disabled colleagues.

The Disability Discrimination Act is trying to enforce employment rights for disabled people (*DN*, July) though there is still a long way to go. Some organisations operate good practices over and above the



Kate Nash

requirements of the act.

One is the Leadership Consortium (*tel: 0171 403 9433*) which aims to develop the "cream of

Britain's six million disabled people" in the shape of a fast track programme that offers individuals sponsorship, training and links with major companies.



Elaine Bromberg on placement at the Lord Chancellor's Office

Director Kate Nash says the scheme, which she now runs, gave her the career boost she needed. "I was already in quite a senior management role with Arthritis Care yet with little management training. I applied and was awarded a bursary. This gave me a year of management training which lead to a position as an associate at the Employers' Forum on Disability and then as the Forum's business development manager.

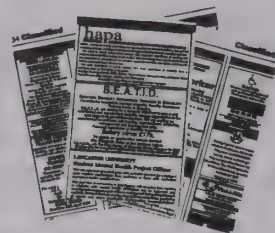
"We now have 11 bursary places and hope to double that in the 1998 intake which we are recruiting for at the moment."

The charity Scope (*tel: 0171 636 5020*) offers a graduate development programme for people with disabilities called Fast-Track.

The scheme is run in partnership with Training and Enterprise Councils and national companies including Boots and British Gas.

It offers individuals two six month work placements, personal development training, regular appraisals and a salary.

Alex White, 34, got a place on the Scope Fast-Track scheme. He says: "I was working as a journalist when I developed repetitive strain injury (RSI).



"I could not get work so I applied for Fast-Track. I had some very interesting work placements and have been able to get back to writing. I now work as a copy writer for Scope.

"I would recommend the scheme because you learn so much being in a group with other people with a wide range of disabilities."

Another organisation, Workable, (*tel: 0171 222 1803*) also helps disabled graduates to get on in the job world by arranging work placements.

Workable's director, David Bennett, says: "We began in 1990 and work by promoting our services at universities. Students and post graduates apply to their regional centre and we give them interviews.

"Then we ally individuals' aspirations with organisations that can provide the relevant work experience, such as Ford or BT. We are also running two professional projects in the fields of law and insurance."

Elaine Bromberg, 24, who is visually impaired, heard about Workable while at the University of East London.

"I was put forward for two placements, the first at the Lord Chancellor's Department, where I worked in the Equal Opportunities Department. This was a six week paid

placement and I was also working part time so I had enough to live on.

"My second placement was at Haringey Council. Through that I got a job with the Open College for the Arts. Then I came to Workable where I co-ordinate the Graduate Support Scheme for the whole of London.

"Quite often work placements will lead to full time jobs because the companies will recognise the individual's potential and will then be happy to put them forward for graduate type jobs."

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR), (*tel: 0171 250 3222*) has a bursary scheme to help disabled people fund training in journalism. This started in 1990 and covers the costs of pre-entry training.

The bursary is awarded to the best disabled candidate for a full time National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) course.

This year, RADAR has set up a pilot scheme for a bursary on a similar course approved by the National Council for the Training of Broadcast Journalists (NCTBJ).

Both bursaries cover the costs of course fees and RADAR will also consider contributing towards rent, living expenses and other needs.

RADAR bursary winner, Bridget Dray, 23, who has hypermobility syndrome (which affects her ligaments) says: "I applied to a number of courses and for the bursary. I had to do some written tests as well as providing a CV. Then I got a letter saying I had been awarded the bursary and was also told by City University that I had got a place.

"I have now got a job on a London based, trade magazine called *Shop Equipment News*."

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## Moving on up!

• **Blind in Business** runs a Job Covenant scheme which offers people with visual impairments help with application forms and interviews. *Tel: 0171-588 1885.*

• **Opportunities for Disabled People** runs Ready for Work courses which offer training. *Tel: 0171-726 4961.*

• **The Open University** in partnership with the College of Law has set up a law degree course aimed at disabled students. *Tel: (01908) 658585.*

• **The Association of Disabled Professionals** has an information sheet on job hunting. *Tel: (01924) 283253.*



# 'My heart breaks to hear her voice'

Sandra Harris says health cuts mean an uncertain future for her family

My daughter Emily has learnt a new word – "why?"

At nearly 19 she has at last managed to formulate a question, and it is breaking my heart.

She wants to know why her local support centre, Greenways, is set to close, and I do not know how to answer her.

The centre for adults with learning difficulties in Tiverton, Devon, is a lifeline for my family and many others. But at the end of August, it, and seven other similar units, could be a victim to the latest round of health service cuts.

Emily has cerebral palsy, severe learning difficulties and is an elective mute. She needs daily physiotherapy and support to carry out everyday tasks, such as dressing and washing.

As a single parent I look after her at home, along with my other 16-year-old daughter, Jenna.

About 18 months ago, I became



Worried: Sandra and Emily fear the future

MARCUS THOMPSON

exhausted and depressed from years of being a sole carer. I was having to face the heartbreaking prospect of putting Emily into residential care.

I started to use Greenways which took her for one night a week. This meant I could get uninterrupted sleep, knowing my daughter was safe and well cared for by qualified staff. One night became two and I began

to recover and gain strength and confidence – I even started a small part-time job.

Emily goes to East Devon College where she loves taking part in a programme aimed at broadening experience and increasing independence. With the help of a support worker she is able to have a go at most things, and her favourites are cooking, poetry and trampolining.

Two nights each week after college, Greenways gives Emily the opportunity to experience a social life of her own, away from a day service or college setting.

The Greenways staff have come to know and understand Emily's needs and she has improved her social skills and started up friendships with staff and other disabled people.

In this quieter environment, to everyone's surprise, she has struck up a special friendship with a woman even more withdrawn than herself. Emily has proceeded to "draw out" this friend, by encouraging her to take part in singing and clapping games – when nobody else is around of course!

Greenways is vital, chiefly because there are no other respite services for carers in the Tiverton area. It also provides clinics, support to people living independently, an emergency service in a crisis, and a doctor is on call 24 hours a day.

In June, we got a curt note from the chief executive of the health authority telling us the shocking news that Greenways will close this summer. They say clients will get an

assessment of their needs, but as far as we can gather, no respite care has been allocated after 31 August and "care in the home" will be offered as an alternative.

But this is no alternative at all for the clients who need to extend their independence away from home and improve their social skills. And as for the carers – what kind of break is it to have to incorporate a care worker into your home?

Despite Emily's elective mutism, she is expressing her concern about the proposed closure. Other clients want help to organise a petition and stage a demonstration. Some have broken down in tears.

When I previously considered residential care, I felt wracked with guilt. But since I started having a regular weekly break I have seen Emily and my own life in a new light.

She is an individual with her own contribution to make and my own life is full of possibilities. I do not want to lose this.

• North and East Devon Health Authority says a decision whether to close Greenways will be taken in August.

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# Letters to the Editor



*Disability Now*, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ  
Minicom: 0171-436 9914 Fax: 0171-436 4582  
e-mail: Editor@DisabilityNow.org.uk

## DN goes global

Just discovered your newspaper on the web. I have wondered for some time if there was a voice for the disabled and now I've found it.

I'm a volunteer driver for a couple of disabled charities and I find that many disabled people suffer real pain or extreme discomfort when bounced over those damned road humps. Has anyone thought of the pain they suffer because of these things? Or

should I say, does anyone care?  
Alan Holmes

Congratulations on getting on the web. I am looking forward to future magazine information on the web especially so I can get my American friends to log in.

My daughter has spina bifida and hydrocephalus and we receive your mag, which I think is splendid.  
Eve Clyne

## Naidex: this just won't do

Nicky Mason's reply (*DN June*) to my letter (*DN May*) seems to me to compound the problem Reed Exhibition Companies UK have created.

Far from responding to my objection to Naidex's changed view about disabled people, she has made it worse.

She says disabled people "who work and have a role (my emphasis) in the disability arena will be ...welcome", whereas "members of the public" can attend local Independent

Living events. That's not an answer.

I am a disabled "member of the public" and I am still waiting to know that I and other disabled members of the public will be welcome at next year's Naidex – after all, we are the people who use the equipment that is displayed. I really would like a direct reply.  
Sue McMullen  
Chairperson  
The Disabled Living Centre  
Fishponds, Bristol

## Disabled widowed mothers lose out

I write with reference to "Mums' cash headache" (*DN June*).

I contracted polio in childhood, but was fortunate to be able to undertake employment as a registered disabled person until three years ago, when I had an accident which increased my disability and brought on post polio syndrome. This has put very severe restrictions on my ability to care for myself, my daughter and my home, and makes any form of employment impossible.

I applied for and was awarded

severe disablement allowance – then notified I would not be paid this as I am in receipt of widowed mothers' pension. "Payment of both benefits are not allowed under Social Security (overlapping benefits) Regulation 4."

Widowed mothers' pension is paid via my late husband's national insurance contributions, deducted while he was employed.

Severe disablement allowance should be available to me via my own personal disability requirement.

Disabled widowed mothers

are being severely financially disadvantaged when unable through disability to undertake employment. They are unable to receive entitled allowance to compensate for loss of earnings.

Women are allowed to earn any amount and still receive widowed mothers' pension, which is taxable.

Yet another example of disability benefits not reaching the person that needs them most – the disabled person.

Helene McLean  
Portnahaven, Islay, Scotland

## Polls apart

Why do you persist in perpetuating the myth that disabled people require to attend a polling booth in order to register their vote? (*DN June*)

Any disabled person can quite readily obtain a postal vote – I have had one for many years, being a 100 per cent war disabled pensioner.

I really think that you ought to know better, because complaining about a problem which does not exist merely means that when complaints are made about problems that do exist, less notice is taken.

Jack Shaw  
Rawdon, Leeds

I have written to the new Minister of Employment and Equal Opportunities, Andrew Smith, suggesting a simple objective for his department to achieve

over the next five years: that, by the next General Election, all polling stations must be accessible for wheelchair users and visually impaired people.

Let's see what the response is. The present situation is monstrously unfair and cannot be allowed to continue.

Dr Christopher Goodall  
York

## Benefits Agency

Given Dr Alan Patterson's allegations about fraud against a background of actual documented cases of mistreatment, (*DN July*), the Secretary of State must urgently set up an enquiry into the Benefits Agency Medical Service at Arden House, Newcastle, to ensure public confidence and accountability.

Nothing less will satisfy those of us who voted Labour.

C Marshall  
Wallsend upon Tyne

## Motability reply

David Griffiths quotes an unacceptably high deposit for a rear access vehicle (the VW Sharan) (*DN June*). He does not tell readers that this is not the cheapest option they can take.

Whilst new applicants to the Mobility Equipment Fund can expect a waiting list of around 17 months, renewal customers, where possible, are considered three months before the expiry of their current agreement.

Anne-Marie Chatterton  
Press & PR manager  
Motability, Harlow, Essex

## DN's diary

by Dan Batten

### Coitus not allowed us

Hot on the heels of Opus Dei, the Vatican is Crip Bashing again in support of a bio-ethics consultant who says disabled people should abstain from sex in order to avoid "infecting" their partners or creating "handicapped" children. Maria Cristina Baldacci feels we alien beings should be cut off from our sexual urges (OUCH!) and "collaborate with God to avoid causing further pain and sorrow." Pity Mr & Mrs B couldn't have prophesied their daughter's words prior to her conception.

### No "Di" crease

Charities dumped by Princess Diana in her purge last year have found that the loss of her patronage has not harmed their income at all. Only one said it had, but rumours that it used disabled people to produce blue surgical masks and mine detectors remain unconfirmed.

### Dead letter day

Benefits Agency boffins struck again when they sent Vicky Robotham a letter demanding £73.20 for not reporting her "dead" son. She had just taken him to school. BA staff apologised, stating the error was due to sending "cretinous incorrect letter No 65432" and not 75432.

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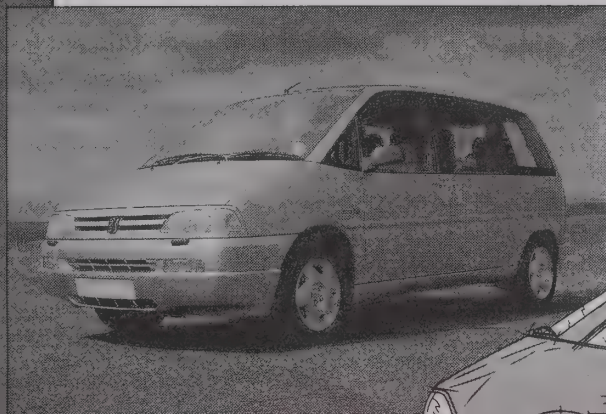
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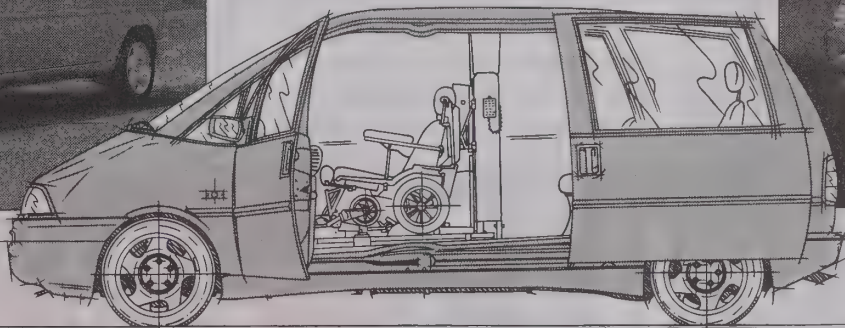
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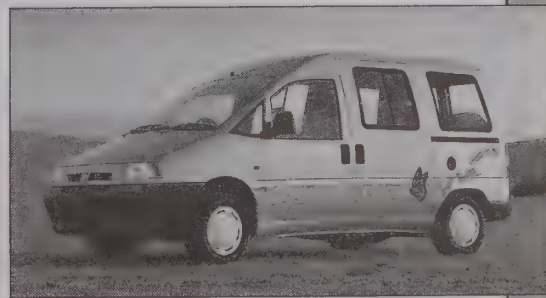
### *Ford Courier*

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# Ship-shape!

Anne Davies visited a grand old museum which now has super access

On a recent family visit to Portsmouth, I took the opportunity to visit the Royal Marines Museum on the seafront.

Housed in what was the officers mess Eastney, the new Corps History Exhibition is on two recently converted floors of the north wing. Built in 1868 with a massive "grand style" external stone staircase to the first floor entrance, the building posed many access problems for disabled visitors. But with much careful thought and expert advice it has been achieved.

The entrance for disabled visitors is well signed and sited on the ground floor under the external staircase. There is an entry phone and a wide automatic door. Just inside, leaflets (printed black on yellow) are displayed on a board and give detailed routes and plans of the three floors.

The wide corridor leads to a new lift, taking me to the main reception on the first floor.

Nearby is the gift shop; the colours hall and the magnificent Mountbatten room.

The exhibition rooms on the first floor tell the tale from 1664 and the Duke of York and Albany's Maritime Regiment of Foot, from which the Corps is thought to trace its origins.

Vivid set pieces recreate the early history; the life at sea: recruitment and the tale of Hannah Snell, a woman who passed for a male marine. There are lots of early uniforms, momentos and models of ships, including an excellent



Using the new lift

one of HMS Victory. I was particularly interested to see the actual muster roll of 147 marines serving on HMS Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar.

Scenes from the China and Sudan campaigns and World War I complete the exhibits on



The Royal Marines Museum, Southsea

this floor. A new WC for disabled visitors has been fitted here and is on the leaflet.

We took the lift to the second floor picture and silver gallery and peered over into the Mountbatten room below us. Then through to the band room and medal room. Portraits of those awarded Victoria Crosses are here, together with names and medals of men who have served over the years.

A super new wheelchair platform lift has been installed (and you can work it yourself), which took me to the World War II, D Day, Suez and Falklands exhibits. Videos, pictures and photographs bring home the reality of those times. Here too are examples of the role of the present day

Royal Marine, including peace keeping.

We took the main lift to the ground floor and exit. A pressure pad (marked A on the leaflet) opens the outer door.

At the moment the coffee shop is not accessible but the staff will bring refreshments to you if you ask.

The museum is now working to improve facilities for sensory impaired visitors.

Considering the difficulties faced in making a building of this age and grandeur accessible to disabled visitors, I was delighted to see they had achieved so much. The museum is a fascinating place for all age groups.

Royal Marines Museum, tel: (01705) 819385.

August

The National Birds Of Prey Centre has one of the largest collections in the country, an indoor hawkwalk and a con barn, an indoor hawkwalk and a con barn, an indoor hawkwalk and a con barn. 10.30 and 5.30. Five flying demonstrations. Fully accessible to disabled visitors. Information, and a chance to win tickets.

The Forestry Commission has a series of events around the country, including evening events, walks and story telling. The Forestry Commission, 231 Colchester Road, Colchester, Essex. Tel: 0131-334 0303.

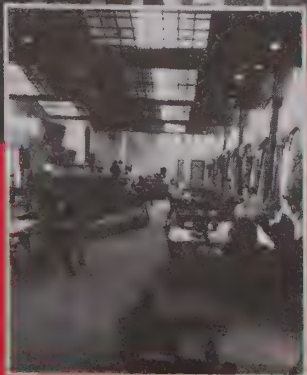
The Royal town of Renfrew is holding its 600 years of Royal Burgh Status. September. Its extensive programme of events. From dance to a street fayre, theatre, something for everyone. For further information contact Hutchinson, Events Co-ordinator, 1000 PA4 8QR, tel: 0141-886 1997.

Two River Thames boat operators. Catamaran Cruisers run daily from Cross Pier and travelling to St Kat. Greenwich and the Thames Barrier. Up to five wheelchairs. Toilets are accessible. Catamaran Cruisers at Victoria Embankment.

For upstream cruises, try the King's Pier to Kew, Richmond and Hampton. A good accessible place to alight is Kew. Tel: 0181-871 1111. Contact Charles Wyatt on 01753 871 1111.

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## tings

ster, is celebrating its 30th  
ionist Jemima Parry-Jones, it  
ld, including an eagle barn, fal-  
courtyard. Open daily between  
a day from April to September.  
(01531) 820286. For further infor-  
page 35.

aflets giving details of events  
re fully accessible such as fami-  
information on your area from  
e Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7AT,

stival, Renfrew 600, to celebrate  
July, it runs until the end of  
es all ages and creative skills.  
er festival, there is sure to be  
nation contact Diane  
7 600, 8 High Street, Renfrew

wheelchair accessible boats.  
to 4pm, starting at Charing  
Dock, the Tower of London,  
at any stop; some boats can take  
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42.

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ive coaching on land and water.  
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## et towed away!



anks to a unique scheme, dis-  
ed people around New Milton  
l now be able to venture off-road.  
he John Sewill Countryside  
iler Unit is named after the late  
an Sewill, whose will trust start-  
the fund for this project.  
he unit was built to the specifica-  
ns of Age Concern, New Milton.  
onsists of a trailer which can  
e a combination of wheelchairs  
d seats, and a mini-tractor that  
s offloaded to pull the trailer off-  
nd.

he trailer can be towed to many  
stinations around New Milton,  
abling visits to, amongst other  
ces, the New Forest, the coast,  
rdens, steam rallies and agricul-  
al shows.

This is a marvellous idea and a  
of thought has gone into it," said  
avid Griffiths, DN's motoring cor-  
pondent.

It was clever to put the tractor  
to the trailer. Most disabled peo-  
don't see the New Forest - now  
ey will be able to."

contact Rosemary or Peter at New  
ilton Age Concern, tel: (01425)  
0390.



An international tour: Steve spreads his knowledge abroad

## The right track

Have you ever wanted to take a  
cycling holiday, but couldn't as  
you lacked an appropriate  
cycle? Here's your answer - the  
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West run by Wheels For All is  
at four locations.

- The Peak District National  
Park, at Parsley Hay, Buxton  
and Derwent, Fairholmes, are  
great points to start traffic-free  
rides in stunning country.
- At the Wyre Estuary Country  
Park, cycle along the Wyreside  
Trail (tel: (01253) 857890).
- At Alsager, in the traffic-free  
campus of Manchester  
Metropolitan University,

accommodation is also avail-  
able (tel: 0161-247 5565).

• Swinton is the headquarters  
for Wheels for All, where you  
can hire bikes to take away  
with you on your own cycling  
trip (tel: 0161-794 1926).

Wheels for All is opening up  
a new centre in Merseyside on  
10 August. If you fancy a free  
invite to the official opening  
call Hayley Anne Reed on  
0161-794 1926.

Alternatively, why not visit  
Cowm Reservoir near Rochdale?  
You can have a go at waterski-  
ing for disabled people, and  
hire bikes. Tel: (01706) 852534.

## Take a tram to 1900...

The National Tramway  
Museum (NTM) at Crich,  
Derbyshire, is hosting a  
National Festival of Transport  
24-25 August.

Enthusiasts of any age can  
experience "the golden age of  
travel", with beautifully  
restored vintage trams, motor-  
cycles, period cars, charabancs,  
commercial and military vehi-  
cles from a wide period.

In June the museum won a  
top award from the  
Department of National  
Heritage, for its excellence as  
one of the UK's top 26 muse-  
ums and galleries.

The museum has an exhibi-  
tion hall containing a replica  
tramway trade fair of the  
1900s, and a collection of over  
60 trams, some of which are  
from overseas. You can also  
travel on many of these on the

mile-long track through a  
1900s streetscape. An access  
tram (below), a 1969 Berlin  
tram, can take 14 passengers  
and four wheelchair users.

For details on all tram rides,  
ring in advance on: (01773)  
852565, fax: (01773) 852326.



## Guiding light

Damien Vessey  
talked to a tour  
guide with a  
difference

If you are going to Liverpool,  
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art tour? Steve Binns is a guide  
for Liverpool City Council,  
who is also blind.

Steve gives guided tours  
around the 18th century town  
hall (fully accessible), and the  
19th century St George's Hall  
(accessible as far as renovation  
work has reached), where you  
can see works by famous  
artists and sculptors such as  
John Henry Amschewitz, stu-  
dent of John Singer Sargent.

Steve's background interest in

history, his dedication and  
perseverance make him an  
ideal guide. He was only  
transferred into this job after  
picketing the council.

Memorising everything  
about the halls and their  
works of art is no easy feat.

"I enjoy the responsibility of  
the job and being in charge of  
peoples' enjoyment of the  
buildings. I'm proud of what I  
do," said Steve.

For information call Steve  
Binns on 0151-225 5511, or  
write to The Public Relations  
and Information Service,  
Liverpool City Council,  
Ground Floor, Commerce  
House, Sir Thomas Street,  
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Lindsey Etchell picks out vacuum cleaners to make housework easier

There is a lot of variation between vacuum cleaner models to take into account. How well they clean, how easy they are to use and, of course, what they cost will all be important. Two recent independent reports should help you choose.

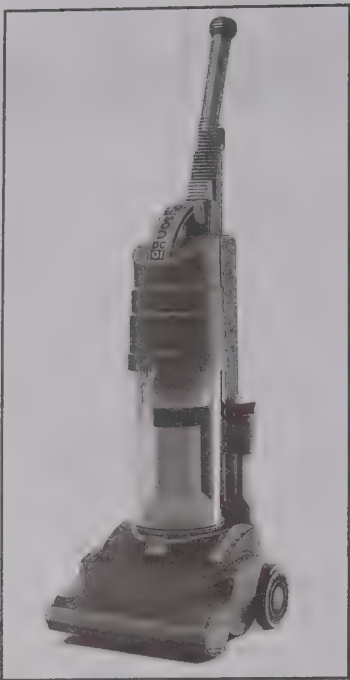
The July 1997 issue of *Which?*, published by Consumers' Association, gives test results on the performance of 15 vacuum cleaners – nine cylinders and six uprights. And RICA has produced a detailed factsheet, *Choosing a vacuum cleaner that's easy to use*.

### Setting up

To clean a floor with an upright cleaner, you simply plug in and start pushing. They have a permanently connected hose, to which tubes and a cleaning tool are attached for specific tasks.



Changing the dust bag



The Dyson DCO1 did well

With a cylinder cleaner, a hose, tubes and cleaning head have to be set up. The cylinder models varied in how much strength and dexterity they needed to fit the hose and tubes.

The more force you use to push together the tubes and tools, the more strength you will need to pull them apart. Some cylinders have telescopic tubes, which might be easier to extend than pushing together separate sections, but those we assessed needed some strength to pull out the tube. They were also heavy to lift.

Most of the cylinders had automatic cord rewind, operated by light pressure from a foot or hand on a large push button. The two cylinders with manual rewind were fiddly to deal with. All the uprights assessed had easier, quick release cord hooks.

# Easy cleaning

### Cleaners on test

**Cylinders:** Daewoo RC-705D £90, Dyson DC02 £200, Dyson DC02 Absolute+ £230, \*Electrolux Chic 1856 £70, Goblin Rio 310 1100W £50, \*Miele S310i £150, Morphy Richards Handy 70011 £80, \*Panasonic MC-E863 £110, Rowenta Revo RSO07 £100. **Uprights:** \*Dyson DCO1 £200, Electrolux Contour Z1436 £120, Hitachi CV775D £100, \*Hoover PurePower U3141 £200, \*Hoover PurePower U3120 £130, \*Sebo Automatic X1 £200.

### Cleaning

An upright cleaner is recommended for wide spaces on one level. Those on test needed fairly light pressure to push around.

There was more variation between the carrying weight of the cylinders and between the pressure needed on their tubes and cleaning head. Both the Goblin Rio and the Rowenta Revo were light to carry, but the Goblin needed sustained pressure to work effectively.

### Using the controls

The RICA factsheet lists the controls on each model and how easy they were to use. Most of the cylinders had large on/off push buttons that could be pressed fairly lightly.

They had switches on the cleaning head to change from hard floor to carpet, which varied in ease of use. Most of the suction controls were sliders – some were small and stiff to move.

On/off controls were on the main handles of the uprights, either push buttons or switches that varied in the strength

needed to operate them. Adjustment for floor type or carpet height was automatic or by slider or, on the Hitachi cleaner, by a dial which you had to bend down to reach.



Daewoo's sliding power control

### Dealing with the dust

Changing or emptying the dust bag and changing the filters was cramped or fiddly in some way with all the cleaners tested.

More than half had throwaway dust bags which were easier to deal with than reusable bags, and less messy than the dust canister on both the Dyson cleaners.

### Which one will suit you?

All the models assessed are listed in the box (left), with prices and with a star by those recommended by *Which?* Prices are typical shop prices or manufacturers' guide prices for cleaners not widely available.

If weight and pushing pressure are all important to you, have a look at the small Rowenta Revo cylinder. It could be carried on a wheelchair, and has a long carrying strap. However, its controls were rather stiff to use. Other cylinders worth considering

### Cleaner checklist

- Weight – the lighter to carry the better
- Pushing force – the lighter to push the better
- Carrying handle – is it comfortable?
- Automatic cord rewind or quick release cord hook – these are the easiest to use
- Hose, tubes and tools – can they be fitted together and taken apart easily?
- Controls – are they all large enough to grip, and needing little strength to use?
- Visibility – contrasting colours against background help, for controls and stored tools
- Throwaway dust bags are less messy – check they are not too fiddly to change

were the Daewoo, Electrolux Chic and Panasonic. They all performed well in the *Which?* tests, and although heavier to carry, their controls needed less strength than the Rowenta's.

Of the upright cleaners, the Dyson DCO1 performed best and overall was easy to use, but it was heavy to carry and emptying the dust canister was messy.

Other good performers were the Sebo and both Hoover PurePower models. The on/off control on the Dyson, Sebo and the Hoover PurePower U3120 needed little strength.

If your eyesight is poor, the colour contrast on the cleaners will affect your choice.

Among the good performers were all the Dyson cleaners and the Morphy Richards cylinder which were in light colours, with some contrasting controls. The Dyson DC02 Absolute+ and Morphy Richards had contrasting coloured tools.

For the factsheet, send a large (A4) sae to: RICA, 2 Marylebone Road, London NW1 4DE. This series of reports in DN has been made possible by Glaxo Wellcome plc.

# PAIN!

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# Painbusters

In the second of our three part series, Lisa Hitchen speaks to the pain professionals

If you glance through the *Pain Clinic Directory*, there seem to be loads of treatments for pain ranging from the exotic (chemical sympathectomy) to the traditional (physiotherapy). Yet as anyone who has chronic pain will tell you, there is no such thing as the "cure all" remedy.

The first port of call for many people experiencing pain will be their GP.

This can be a positive experience, as Miranda Jarrett from Kent, who has spina



**Miranda Jarrett** bifida, found. "I've had pain on the right side of my back for six years. Traditional medicine didn't seem to help, so I went to my GP and said I'd like to try something else and he was very supportive. I tried physiotherapy and acupuncture on the NHS, but the real breakthrough came two years ago when I went to an

osteopath privately. This has had marvellous results.

"I think it is horses for courses, different things work for different people."

Barbera Fentiman, also from Kent, had a more difficult time with her GP.

She damaged the nerves in the base of her spine when she was 13. "The pain was horrific at the onset and it completely disrupted my schooling. But my parents never took me to hospital to get checked over because I could still walk.

**"Research has shown that it is a case of use it or lose it."**

"When I was nearly 15 I did go to a GP and had an X-ray. I had broken my coccyx and it had set at the wrong angle. I was referred to a surgeon but I panicked and refused to go.

"I used to think I had a good relationship with my GP but whenever I expressed concern about my back and asked to have different treatments, he refused. His attitude was 'stop worrying, you can't get any worse.' Twenty years later, in 1991, he was telling me to go to a chiropractor.

"I've been told since that my posture was put out by the injury and that I should have

been exercising for the last 30 years, so I left that practice and complained about my GP.

"In 1995 I spent four weeks at Input, a pain clinic at St Thomas' Hospital, and this was the best help I had ever had."

The Input Pain Management Unit is one of the largest and most well established pain clinics in the UK.

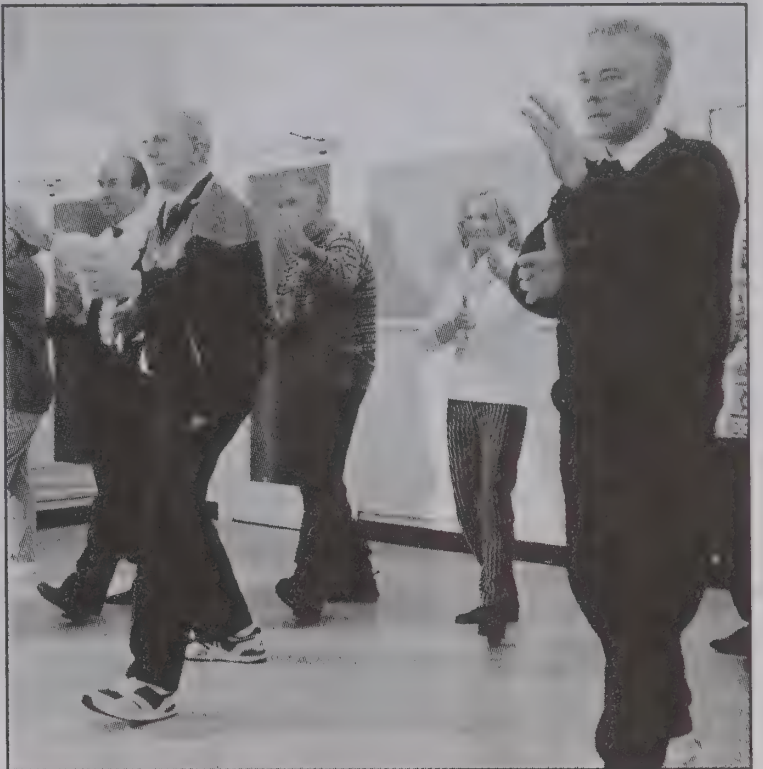
Ruth Mitchell, a charge nurse at Input, says: "Often a whole person's life is affected by pain so we offer a programme that treats the whole person. We aim to help people to manage their pain and reduce distress and suffering.

"The programme involves exercise and stretch to improve fitness, mobility and posture, occupational therapy to help with goal setting, psychology and relaxation. In many cases medication does not relieve the pain and gives unwanted side effects, so people are encouraged to reduce their tablets over a period of time."

Another renowned pain clinic is the Centre for Pain Relief at the Walton Centre in Liverpool.

Pain consultant, Dr Tim Nash, acknowledges the benefits of medication.

He says: "The first line really is drugs. Quite often people have not tried drugs which we know are very helpful in certain situations. For example, pain



Tai Chi classes help ease pain

WALTON CENTRE

from nerve injury frequently responds better to anti-depressant drugs than to pain killers. This is because anti-depressants are able to affect the chemistry of the nerves appropriately.

"Where the drugs don't work, we have to look to other ways of managing pain.

"There may be a place for other treatments such as transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) or acupuncture.

"The biggest problem in the end is the way people have been handled previously: where people were put to bed until they got better. We now know that keeping people active is much less likely to lead to

chronic pain or death. Research has shown that it is a case of use it or lose it.

"Overcoming peoples' fears after they have been told to rest and not overdo it for years is very difficult. And if people are protecting themselves the whole time and not moving normally and their joints are stiffening up, it compounds the problem.

"People that are not coping can be helped by our pain management programme approach. This looks to rehabilitate people by encouraging them to be active - moving them away from the feeling that pain is harmful and setting targets so they can do more than they could before."

## Easing the way

Electrical stimulation can be used to interfere with pain messages sent from the muscles or organs to the brain. Research into electrical therapies, which can suppress or mask pain, has led to a number of electrical stimulators being produced for commercial use.

One of the most common is the transcutaneous electrical stimulation (TENS) machine (see right).

Neen Healthcare produces the Lifetime Microtens which consists of two electrode pads connected to a small battery operated unit.

TENS works by passing an electrical current through the peripheral nerves under the skin. This produces a tingling sensation which can bring pain relief. Neen Healthcare, tel: (01362) 6989966.

But TENS does not work for everyone and new products are being developed. One is the sub-perception electrical stimulation (SPES) unit. SPES is



TENS in action NEEN HEALTHCARE

a portable box with two electrodes which are connected to the earlobes. Imperceptible, electrical pulses are passed through the brain.

SPES is expected on the market in October. *Spinal Injuries Association*, tel: 0181-444 2121.

Other products already available include the Medicur Portable Electro-magnetic Therapy Unit from Medicur UK, tel: (0115) 914 1144 and the LISS Cranial and Body Stimulator Unit from Snowbold, tel: 0181-500 4459.

## Pain clinics

Antrim Hospital, County Antrim, tel: (01849) 424000.

Castle Hill Hospital, Hull, tel: (01482) 875875.

City Hospital, Belfast tel: (01232) 329241.

Corbett Hospital, Stourbridge, tel: (01384) 456111.

Gartnavel General Hospital, Glasgow, tel: 0141-211 3000.

Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Canterbury, tel: (01227) 766877.

St Thomas' Hospital, London, tel: 0171-922 8107.

The Walton Centre, Liverpool, tel: 0151-529 4186.

University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff, tel: (01222) 743107.

Warrington General Hospital, Warrington, tel: (01925) 635911.

Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, tel: 0131-537 1000.

Ysbyty Gwynedd Hospital, Bangor, tel: (01248) 384384.

For a copy of *The Pain Clinic Directory*, contact the College of Health, tel: 0181-983 1225.

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# Is it right on in Brighton?

Sun, sea...and pebbles – Helen Gregory checks out one of the UK's favourite resorts

Only an hour away from London, Brighton makes a welcome summer break for a day or weekend.

The town has long had a salacious reputation, but in recent years the students, retired people, discerning diners and fun-seeking clubbers have transformed Brighton into a cosmopolitan and lively resort.

Although the town is generally hilly, miles of seafront are accessible.

## Getting there

The Victorian-designed Brighton Station, tel: (01273)

324487, has good access and facilities, as does neighbouring Hove.

Coach services run regularly, but Brighton Coach Station, tel: (01273) 206666, leaves a lot to be desired access-wise.

If you are driving, take the M23.

## Out and about

The Palace Pier is one of the most popular visitor attractions, with pubs, numerous fast food kiosks, fairground rides and souvenirs.

The Sea Life Centre on the seafront, tel: (01273) 604233 is



The Lanes shopping streets

accessible and the entertaining aquarium makes for a good day out for the family.

The Royal Pavilion, tel: (01273) 292820, (above) is King George IV's unusual and magnificent holiday home and Brighton's most famous landmark.

Only the ground floor is accessible to wheelchair users, but the Pavilion also has a tactile tour and sign language interpreting guided tours.

For steam fans the British Engineerium, tel: (01273) 559583, is one of the finest museums in the country. It is accessible but advises visitors with special needs to telephone first.

## Entertainment

Brighton is known for its pre-West End productions, but the historic Theatre Royal, tel: (01273) 328488, the most prominent of the very few theatres in Brighton – does not have a wheelchair accessible toilet.

The multi-screen MGM Cinema at Brighton Marina, tel: (01273) 818094, is much more easy to get into, as is the Brighton Centre, tel: (01273) 202881, which has numerous and varied entertainment.

## Accommodation

There are many bed and breakfast hotels in Brighton, although many are in small houses.

The bigger hotels are often a better bet, and the Lawns Hotel, tel: (01273) 736277, the Stakis Brighton Hotel, tel: (01273) 329744, and the Norfolk Resort Hotel, tel: (01273) 738201, are very accommodating to wheelchair users.

## Shopping

Western Road and North Street in the centre of town have the main stores – many have good access. The old, labyrinthine Lanes shopping area is more difficult but also more interesting, with antique shops, jewellers and boutiques.

## Eating and drinking

Brighton is awash with pubs, bars, restaurants and fast food shops. Fish and chips are popular on the seafront and Bankers in Church Road, tel: (01273) 328267 is a good choice.

Other wheelchair friendly restaurants are the Master Mariner at Brighton Marina Village, tel: (01273) 670634 and the new Waffle House, tel: (01273) 747808.

The Zap nightclub is a trendy, popular and accessible spot,

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tel: (01273) 775987, as is Horatio's Bar on the Palace Pier, tel: (01273) 609361.

## Getting around

Brighton Streamline Taxis, tel: (01273) 747474, and Hove Streamline Taxis, tel: (01273) 202020, have adapted taxis.

Brighton and Hove Bus Company, tel: (01273) 886200 has 15 low-floor buses on the number 49 route. Community Transport, tel: (01273) 505888 runs Dial-a-ride buses weekdays 10am-2pm.

Brighton has 473 disabled parking bays and 21 toilets for disabled people which are locked with RADAR national keys, tel: 0171-250 3222.

Hire wheelchairs from Care Centre for the Less Able, tel: (01273) 733754.

## Removal day

The University of Brighton and East Sussex Fire Brigade are staging a conference *Removing Barriers* for local businesses and organisations to discuss access in the town, at the university on Wednesday 24 September.

Tel: (01273) 642501

## Excellent!

A centre of excellence is being planned to transform the Royal National Institute for the Blind's Wavertree House.

The charity has launched a £200,000 appeal for the project which will turn the centre into self-contained flats with a library, pool, entertainment and employment support and resource centre.

## Good scope

Hamilton House is a day centre for 23 people – one of the very few in the region to cater for profound learning and physical disabilities.

The centre is run by Scope and teaches a range of activities, including pottery, music therapy, art and meditation.

Manager Jenny Eastwood says: "We're into support rather than care and offer sessions for enjoyment and development."

Tel: (01273) 778228

## College book

Sussex University has a booklet *Access Around Campus* which includes facilities and information for both full and part-time students and those on open days.

Tel: (01273) 678152

# St Dunstan's lights the way

With a gym, swimming pool, pub, ballroom, and bowling rink, St Dunstan's is almost a self-contained community.

The charity was founded in 1915 to "provide rehabilitation, training, and lifelong welfare for men and women blinded in war service". Now, those whose sight is impaired in peace time also use the centre in Ovingdean, Brighton.

Eighteen people live permanently at St Dunstan's and current building work will provide another 12 beds. Ten more residents have constant nursing care and the centre is also used as a holiday home.

But St Dunstan's is more famous for its rehabilitation work where people learn skills such as braille, computers, craftwork, independent living and mobility to ease themselves back into civilian life.

General manager Susan Harrison says the charity aims to give people independence with dignity.

"We look at individuals and see what kind of entertainment and training they want."

Elsie Aldred, 75, from Warrington, first went to Brighton in 1943 to learn braille after she was blinded and lost part of her hand



Learning: Elsie Aldred

during the war. She is now learning to use a computer and says: "This is a fresh interest for me and will keep me in touch with people."

"I have learnt a lot here over the years and would have been lost without St Dunstan's."

Jed Sellwood, 35, from Blackpool, was blinded while in the airforce in Germany. He is at St Dunstan's learning craftwork, cooking and Moon.

He says: "I want to live in a warden-assisted flat eventually. Coming here was a really good move for me as there's a lot of stimulation and I am adapting to my disability."

## Life gets sweeter

"There are few angry disabled people here – everyone seems to get the care they require, but it may not be as quickly as we would like."

Val Richards, (right) co-ordinator of the Brighton and Hove Federation of Disabled People, says although life is far from perfect in the town, the newly formed Brighton and Hove Council (formerly Brighton Council) is very supportive.

"Businesses too are starting to try and improve things like access. We are hopeful that the badly needed changes, in transport especially, will occur."

The federation is a charity, made up of 40 organisations which acts as a council

voluntary service of disabled people. It tries to solve problems around the town and is now working on an integrated transport project, along with the council and private companies.

It also plans to set up a pilot scheme to enable people to use direct payments, and Ms Richards says there is already a waiting list of people wanting to use it.

The federation runs an advice centre, tel: (01273) 203016, as well as a counselling service, tel: (01273) 778066.



High flyer: Christopher Hammond, five, shows off the kite he made at the Hove Integration Project – an after-school scheme for able bodied and disabled youngsters.

Cutbacks mean the project, which offers arts, games and cooking, has been reduced to one afternoon and Saturday morning a week, which has angered many parents.

Mum Sue, from Brighton, says: "Christopher is autistic and loves going to the project. He needs to mix with ordinary kids and he doesn't get that at his special school. It's vital that he gets the opportunities the project can give him."

Co-ordinator Jo Collinson says there are more children who cannot get on the scheme. "It's very popular – there is nothing similar in the area."

"It's very important for the children's emotional education and mainstream children benefit equally from it."

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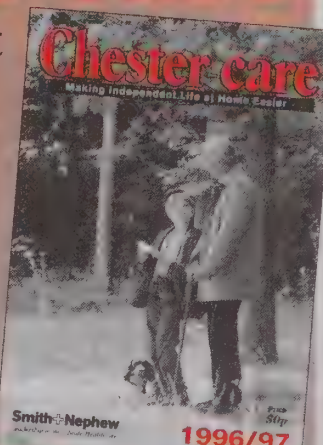
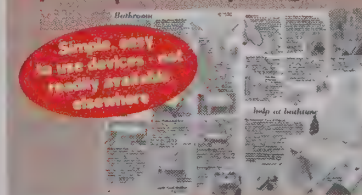
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Not just a teddy bears' picnic: Mark Banks' *Last Supper*, an otherwise traditional scene peopled by teddy bears

## Art

Mark Banks' *Last Supper*, on show in a small gallery opposite the British Museum, is a stained glass panel depicting Jesus and his disciples seated around a long table. All very traditional at first glance, until suddenly you realise that it is peopled entirely by teddy bears and everything seems to be stood on its head.

He began working with teddy bears by a happy accident really. Having made an elaborate Valentine's card featuring a bear, he began to experiment with subverting this symbol of childhood innocence. Sexy bears and

tough bears feature in the work on show.

Inspired by a visit to Graceland, Elvis Presley's house, Banks returned home and taught himself the laborious and technical business of stained glass making. He may also have been influenced by the memory of the crude cartoon characters once painted on the windows at Great Ormond Street Hospital. He remembers particularly disliking these during his countless childhood stays for extensive facial reconstruction.

Many of his subjects are his

own latter-day saints. Buddy Holly, Bob Marley, John Lennon, Elvis Presley and Saibaba have all been commemorated by him, the last two particularly effectively. With kitsch no longer sneered at and icons of popular culture now broadly accepted in contemporary art circles it is, perhaps, a good time for his first London exhibition.

The pick of the show for me are the "religious" panels. Looking at his "Nativity", you wonder quite how to take it. His Joseph bear is a very sweet-faced, kindly-looking sort, which is surely appropriate, but

might not people be offended by the Holy Family as teddies? Surprised, yes, but people are more amused than offended. He has even had a priest ask for a copy to use in his lectures.

Inevitably, I asked him whether he feels his disability has influenced his work. Sensibly enough he supposed it must have done in some ways, but not self-consciously so. Perhaps the general effect has been to imbue him with a sense of tolerance, and a desire deliberately to upset people's expectations; things are not necessarily what they seem.

Adam Reynolds

also be seen as stereotypes (the whore with the heart of gold and the singer ready to do anything to make it to the top), but this is a character-led film and all the performers succeed in bringing their roles to life.

Nobody is wholly good, and nobody is wholly bad. Bazooka is into gun culture and shady deals but he also has a history in the fight against apartheid and sees himself as helping his community. His disability is neither sensationalised nor over-emphasised. While it is implied that his disability is connected with his violent lifestyle, it is never explicitly explained – "it's a long story", he says, during a no-nonsense bedroom scene which shows a sexually active disabled person with no other comments than "the feet don't work but the boy's still sharp".

*Jump the Gun* may suffer a little from being a character-led film, meandering through the little plot that there is, but the characters are engaging and believable, and Bazooka is an example of a truly rounded disabled character, the likes of which will never be seen in a mainstream Hollywood movie.

## Film

Michael Turner

*Jump the Gun* (released 22 August) brings together a motley crew of characters trying to find their way in life in the new South Africa.

This includes Bazooka, a wheelchair-using small-time gangster. Bazooka is far from being the first disabled gangster on film, but on this occasion disability is not used to add menace to the character.

The character is not without menace – as his name suggests. However, the nickname also means goal-scorer in South Africa, and it seems that it is this drive to achieve that his disability is meant to emphasise. Interestingly, the character was not originally written as a disabled person: it was actor Thulani Nyembe's idea to make Bazooka a wheelchair user.

This could easily have become just as much of a cliché, just as the other main characters could

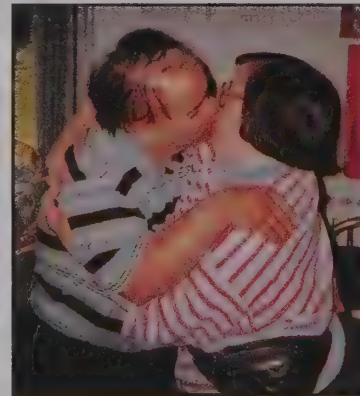


## Exhibition

a day in the lives of...

People waking up, drinking coffee, having breakfast; people travelling in cars, on buses, walking, just crossing the road; people feeding chickens, reading books, hard at work; people at school, at the library, at home – people smiling, laughing, snogging (right), frowning. Just people really. But they are all disabled people, and that's the difference in *a day in the lives of...* It's a true celebration of disabled people – true, because all the images are taken by disabled people from across the East Midlands, and a celebration because the exhibition really does capture the normality of people's lives – in a humorous, interesting, enlightening and downright sexy way!

The National Disability Arts Forum gave out 750 disposable cameras to 750 disabled people, resulting in a collection of over 18,000 images. All participants have at least one photograph in the ensuing collection – both in frames and in the accompanying



computer package.

And it all works – the pictures have been grouped to provide a journey through the day (all participants took pictures on the same day: 31 December 1996) from first dawn to a darn good night. There are images of struggle, of pain, of access issues, and equally images of fun and humour, families and children. It shows that, yes, disabled people are like everyone else, and it also shows that we are special, different. Above all, it shows that we are individuals.

*A day in the lives of...* is currently being exhibited across the East Midlands. For dates and venues, contact Sian Williams, tel: 0171-813 1431; fax: 0171-813 1434.

Jo Verrent

## Television

Chris Davies

This is getting dangerously repetitive. The non-mainstream programmes were the only plentiful source of disability coverage. I did try other sources, honestly!

So what's left? Three episodic dramas, one from America and two from this country.

"Butterfly in Shades of Grey" (ITV 6 July) was from a new batch of Columbo films, which featured a well-known disabled actress. She's not famous here, but very much so in America. Her role in Columbo was a good example of subtle portrayal.

The second example was "Bliss" (ITV 26 June) in which medical hero Sam Bliss concerns himself with a boy who, it is assumed, may have committed murder while having an epileptic fit. This story line is both unoriginal and dishonest.

Thirdly, I caught the last five minutes of the final episode of "Born to Run" (BBC1 29 June). The part I saw featured the usually very able-bodied actor Terence Rigby as a wheelchair user. Since there was nothing in the central story line that indicated disability I didn't watch any more. Given the casting all I can do is speculate.

Last month I quoted as a good example of portrayal the American chat show *Leeza* (C5 weekday). I've found another this month with a better known host – Oprah Winfrey. As a self-made woman she decided to celebrate others like her and give them rewards. The people being awarded were all members of her audience and included a woman who had survived several years of abuse.

Most of these I wouldn't quarrel with, however one example was misplaced. A woman had become paralysed from a spinal injury and had simply got on with life. For this she was given a Hawaiian holiday and a standing ovation.

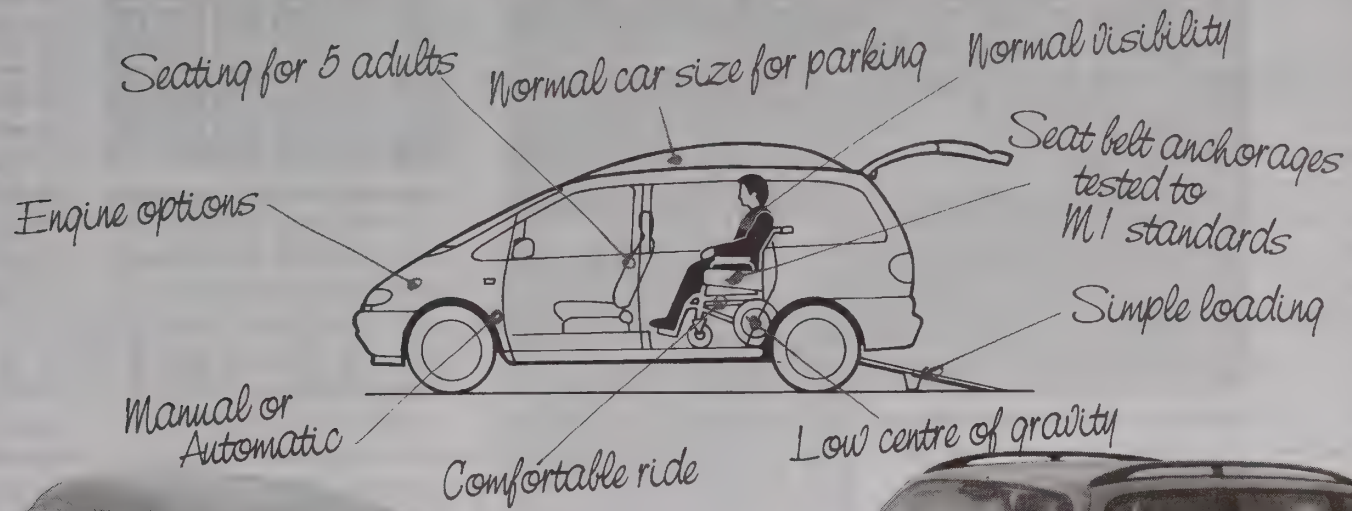
One last thought. The idea for the show had been thought up by Oprah together with Tina Turner. The disabled woman first came on stage from a side that had been ramped. However, as the credits rolled it was clear that she sat on the unramped side. All the celebrated women were called up onto the stage to meet Tina. The wheelchair user's face dropped. Never did it become more obvious that this was patronage and hadn't been thought through.





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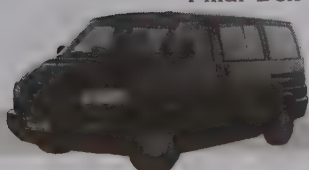
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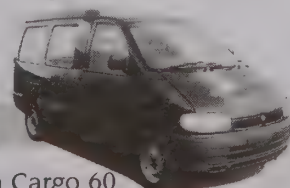
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# It's plane sailing

Charting Trevor Jones's progress from Gordonstoun pupil to Royal Navy helicopter pilot and finally to tetraplegic microlight pilot, his book *Walking on Air*, is partly a voyage of discovery.

He may not have known much about disability issues while he was sailing his father's yacht, or rescuing Richard Branson, after the tycoon's failed attempt to balloon across the Atlantic. But Trevor had to learn fast when he broke his neck as a 26-year-old, while trying to qualify for the Navy's skiing team.

In his autobiography, he describes how a spell in Stoke Mandeville hospital taught him that when people think you are difficult it can mean you are independent.

Friends rallied to support



High flyer: Trevor's book shows a determined young man

him, setting up the Trevor Jones Trust, although their efforts were at first bungling. He complains the car they buy him makes him look like a cripple. "But you are a fucking cripple," says an exasperated friend.

The lesson is: "Before doing anything on behalf of Trevor the one person you ought to consult is Trevor himself".

Emboldened by success with a high-technology car and wheelchair, he went on to become the country's, and probably the world's, first tetraplegic pilot.

Flying an adapted microlight across the English Channel was one of his first efforts to raise money and awareness for other disabled people.

But Trevor explains how being independent-minded brings difficulties in the shape of some personal assistants. At one point he sends one packing, leaving himself in the lurch while flying through Germany. "If they are not right, I will

ask them to leave or they will leave pretty soon," he says. He pays for them from the £1 million damages he won in a lengthy legal battle.

Trevor's next plan is to set sail round the world in 1999 using a solid-sail trimaran controlled by a steering wheel or joystick. "It is the ideal solution for me to get back into sailing because there are no ropes or sales."

The book will help him raise the £400,000 he needs for the yacht. He also hopes the venture will raise money for charities, including the tetraplegic sports charity Regain, which was spawned from the now defunct Trevor Jones Trust.

A human interest story with both humour and poignancy, the book charts the course of a man determined to take control and succeed.

Rod Hermeston

*Walking on Air*, £15.99, Heinemann.

## A Gift of Healing

By Deborah Cowens and Tom Monte  
£12.99, Piatkus

Any parent who has ever comforted a child after a fall will know how touch can make a situation feel so much better. It is an instinctive reaction when someone is ailing.

Deborah Cowens, a registered nurse, has seen the power of therapeutic touch at first hand.

This book gives the reader

permission to explore the gift of healing that is within all of us. There is much explanation in the book, often wordy, about energy fields within the body, particularly those that are blocked, and the transference of energy from different body parts.

There are some interesting cases describing how the gift of healing can create dramatic improvements. In one case of a woman with multiple sclerosis, there are some powerful

examples of positive visualisation well worth reading.

The book infers that it is concerned with Christian healing, when in fact it brings in all aspects of the spiritual, ancient and modern mysticisms, in a very generalised way. Christians would not necessarily find this book helpful, but anyone interested in alternative approaches to medicine would find it a good read.

Lin Berwick

## Book news

*It's Our Welfare* by Peter Beresford and Michael Turner is a report of the Citizens' Commission on the future of the welfare state. It brings together service users' ideas for the future of welfare. £11.95, published by the National Institute for Social Work, 5 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SN, tel: 0171-387 9681.

*On Sight and Insight* is John Hull's "journey into the world of blindness" and records his feelings after he loses his sight, over an eight-year period. £7.99, published by Oneworld, 185 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7AR, tel: (01865) 310597.

*Clouds & Rainbows* is an autobiographical account of 12 years of early onset Parkinson's Disease. Author Ursula Maddon says she wants to target people who have recently been diagnosed and feel depressed, and those who want to help a friend who has Parkinson's Disease. £14.99, Edward Gaskell, Cranford House, 6 Grenville Street, Bideford, Devon EX39 2EA.

*Participatory Video – A practical guide to using video creatively in group development work*, by Jackie Shaw and Clive Robertson, sets out a complete programme for group leaders to teach video work in various settings. £16.99, from Routledge, 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE, tel: 0171-583 9855.



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The centre, now in its 30th year, houses one of the largest collections of birds of prey in the world. It specialises in captive breeding, with successes in 49 species.

The Eagle Barn and Falcon Barn were opened by the



Eagle eye: Jemima Parry-Jones, owner of the centre, with a White Bellied Sea Eagle

Princess Royal in 1987 and 1992 respectively. The centre also contains an Indoor Hawkwalk, which acts as a shelter during the winter months and a secure environment for the young birds.

The Owl Courtyard houses all sizes of owls including European Scops, Burrowing and Pearl Spotted Owls.

Open daily 10.30am-5.30pm, the centre has flying demonstrations at 11.00am, 12.30pm, 2.30pm and 4.15pm from April to September. Each demonstration lasts about 40 minutes and is a rare chance to see up to 40 different birds in flight and acting for the crowds.

The centre is fully accessible for visitors in wheelchairs. Tel: (01531) 820286 for further details.



# Fancy something fishy?

The old Greater London Council building now hosts something much more interesting for tourists and day trippers – the London Aquarium.

And *DN* has five family tickets (two adults and two children) worth £20 each, to give away.

Visitors enter through a cascade of water and wander around three levels of 41 exhibits, featuring various species seen in Britain for the

first time. Another 37 exhibits are devoted to different regions around the world, including the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, Barrier Reef, and the rainforest.

For further information: The London Aquarium, County Hall, Riverside Building, Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7PB. Tel: 0171-967 8000. The Aquarium is fully accessible.

# Beside the sea

The Kingdom of the Sea Horse is the newest attraction at the spectacular Sea Life Centre in Brighton.

Here you can compare exotic tropical species with those found around the coast of Britain. And look out for the Australian Big-Bellied seahorses, which grow up to 15 inches tall.

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For further information, tel: (01273) 604233. For bookings, tel: (01273) 604234. The centre is wheelchair accessible.



# Winners get a lift up

Congratulations to the three lucky winners of our Mangar Pillowlift Special Offer, from the January issue of *DN*.

Mrs Yasmin Laibi (*right*), from Shepherds Bush, London, tries out her new prize, watched by Sam Murphy from Mangar.

Evelyn Reid, from Paisley, Scotland (*below*), received her pillowlift from area manager Graeme Jeffrey.

"I am sure as time goes on I will find more uses for the pillowlift but the early indications are that it will be a tremendous help to my self reliance," she said.



Mrs Butler, from Princes Risborough, Bucks, (*below*) shows off her new prize.



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If you have any ideas or comments about our website or *DN*, please send us an e-mail. Our address is:

[Editor@disabilitynow.org.uk](mailto:Editor@disabilitynow.org.uk)

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### Moved to write

I am really worried about this Government's aim to heavily restrain the use of cars and to get people to make greater use of public transport.

I know all the sound reasons for this – don't we all?

On the face of it, it sounds like common sense. But will the powers-that-be make sure disabled motorists are not driven off the roads?

In all that I have read there has been no mention of safeguards for disabled people who have severe walking difficulties and need their cars to get out and about. I feel the cold severely, and, as a wheelchair user, find it almost impossible to dress up adequately to combat the wind and rain we have to face in this country so much of the time. And sitting around in wet clothing is no fun at all.

Even if a wonderful, accessible transport system becomes a reality, there will still be plenty of us who could not use it. How many severely mobility-disabled people live near bus stops? And what about the other end of the journey?

I am also concerned that the Government is considering taxing the motorist into submission. Again, unless disabled motorists are exempted from such taxes, we could find ourselves confined to our homes because our one and only means of being mobile is priced beyond our slender resources.

*Patrick, Sunderland*

I am glad you have brought up this important subject. It is vital that while the Government is considering its new transport policy and local authorities may well be given greater powers in this area, that disabled people make their views vehemently known.

I know that the disability motoring organisations will be campaigning on this subject, so get in touch with them and add your voice. Between them, they have thousands of members and such a collective voice can make quite a lot of noise.

Contact your MP straight away and make your point forcefully. While you are about it, contact your local councillor. Good luck.

### My family dilemma

I really need to share with you the most agonising decision I feel I have had to make in my life – not to have children.

My mother died from Huntington's Chorea and I watched her deteriorate from a lively, loving mother to a deranged stranger. I learned that this is a genetic condition (a fact that had been hidden from me and my sisters) and that we all had a risk of passing the disease on to any children.

I'm the mothering kind and had always intended to have a big family. But I nursed my mother and my sister and I know just what a horrible disease it is. I couldn't bear any children of mine to be put through that, but it doesn't make my decision any easier.

My sister has gone ahead and hopes her children will escape. I respect that decision. But I feel that choosing motherhood is not just an individual choice; it creates a life which someone else has to live.

*Linda, Thetford*

Although it must have been a dreadful shock when you found

out that your mother had Huntington's Chorea and you started to learn about this very serious condition, it sounds as though in some ways it has brought your family even more closely together, and that you are prepared to support each other in your different and very difficult decisions.

You have clearly made your own mind up, and thank you for sharing this. But for the benefit of other readers I am sure you would agree how important it is to seek out genetic counselling in these situations. Genetic counsellors never aim to make decisions for their clients but to enable them to have the necessary understanding so that they can decide for themselves.

Genetic counselling consists essentially in giving as accurate information as possible, to the extent that knowledge permits, on the possibilities of transmission of inherited or partly inherited conditions. People have a right to avoid genetic hazards if they wish and if this is possible, and a right to know what the risks are. GPs will have details of

local genetics services.

There is a helpful organisation called the Genetic Interest Group which is happy to answer questions and provide details of self-help groups.

### I'm in the money

I suffer from paranoid schizophrenia and *pes cavus* (arched feet) and I receive Incapacity Benefit, Disability Living Allowance and Income Support with disability premium. In all, I receive £150 in benefit per week and pay no rent for my council flat.

Because of my frugal lifestyle I will soon be over the savings limit of £3,000 and that will affect both my Housing Benefit and also my Income Support.

In the circumstances that the savings come from Department of Social Security benefit, do you know if it is possible for me to avoid being penalised in the most likely event of my going over the £3,000 limit?

*Tom, Mitcham*

As I understand the situation, the Benefits Agency has a clear rule regarding savings over £3,000, no matter how these have been gathered. As you may know, the Benefits Agency only penalises you for a percentage of any savings over £3,000. It is not until you reach £8,000 worth of savings that certain benefits stop.

I would suggest that you reconsider your frugal lifestyle and enjoy spending a bit more. You cannot go and deliberately spend capital to reduce the amount of savings, but you can, at this stage, simply enjoy yourself more.

There must be lots of things you could do to enhance your lifestyle. Don't go wild, but have fun.

*Genetic Interest Group, 29-35 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3JB, tel: 0171-430 0090*  
*Disabled Drivers' Association, Ashwellthorpe, Norwich NR16 1EX, tel: (01508) 489449*  
*Disabled Drivers' Motor Club, Cottingham Way, Thrapston, Northamptonshire NN14 4PL, tel: (01832) 734724*  
*Disabled Motorists' Federation, National Mobility Centre, Unit 2a, Atcham Estate, Shrewsbury SY4 4UG, tel: (01743) 761889*



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Your stars

**LEO** (24 July-23 Aug)  
The warm glow you feel in early August gives way to tension as the full moon opposes your sun on the 18th. Don't let the sun go down on your wrath! A tiff with a loved one is less serious than you think.

**VIRGO** (24 Aug- 23 Sept)  
With key planets in your sign, August is an opportunity to deal with practical realities and set your house in order. You can achieve harmony in love if you are the one taking the initiative. Sparks of either passion or a power struggle could fly around the 15th.

**LIBRA** (24 Sept-23 Oct)  
The creative mood continues but some frustration sets in as your flow gets temporarily obstructed. Have patience. You have embarked on a particular course of action which will pay dividends in the end if you stay with it.

**SCORPIO** (24 Oct-22 Nov)  
A sense of calm after the storm gives way around the 15th to an intense period which could be expressed in passionate embrace or deep inner exploration. Whatever happens, you will deepen your self-understanding this month.

**SAGGITARIUS** (23 Nov-21 Dec)  
Now is the time for you to see whether recent activities will bear fruit or leave you exhausted. Hopefully you can take advantage of a holiday this month and get away – but go somewhere quiet where you can re-charge your batteries and consider your next move.

**CAPRICORN** (22 Dec-20 Jan)  
Hopefully all is well on the home front, which will give you the space you need to further your career interests. It will take hard work but you can definitely improve prospects of promotion or a more lucrative

By DN's astrologer Marion Stanton



occupation this month.

**AQUARIUS** (21 Jan-19 Feb)  
Equilibrium returns after some tumult in August. You will probably begin to make sense of confusing and conflicting issues in relationships. The full moon in your sign on the 18th suggests that your intuition could be heightened, but beware of being oversensitive.

**PISCES** (20 Feb-20 March)  
Realising your dreams seems to be alluding you at the moment. Nothing seems to come easily right now. However, the best rewards are the ones you work for and you've been putting enough of that in recently. Put your worries to one side and take a break. Then you might see things in a better perspective.

**ARIES** (21 Mar-20 Apr)  
Take care that your higher than usual energy doesn't affect your health this month. Don't expect much sympathy from loved ones either. Best to lie low and wait for the storm to pass.

**TAURUS** (21 Apr-21 May)  
An argument mid-month could be more than a storm in a tea cup unless you make a concerted effort to steer clear of trouble. Taureans are evaluat-

ing their inner strength and wisdom this year and a lot of difficulties you used to accept as inevitable are now being called into question. There's no gain without pain though.

**GEMINI** (22 May-22 June)  
Your creativity continues to flow and it could be a month when you just feel you can't put a foot wrong. Beware of becoming blasé and putting your foot in it instead. Even when the going is good you will need to keep your commitment up to succeed.

**CANCER** (23 June-23 July)  
You should be in a position to further a project that has been getting stuck, but it might require putting business before pleasure. Hopefully your partner will understand, but I wouldn't bank on it! Try to find time for loved ones as well.

Trivia teasers

Test your knowledge with the following trivia questions:

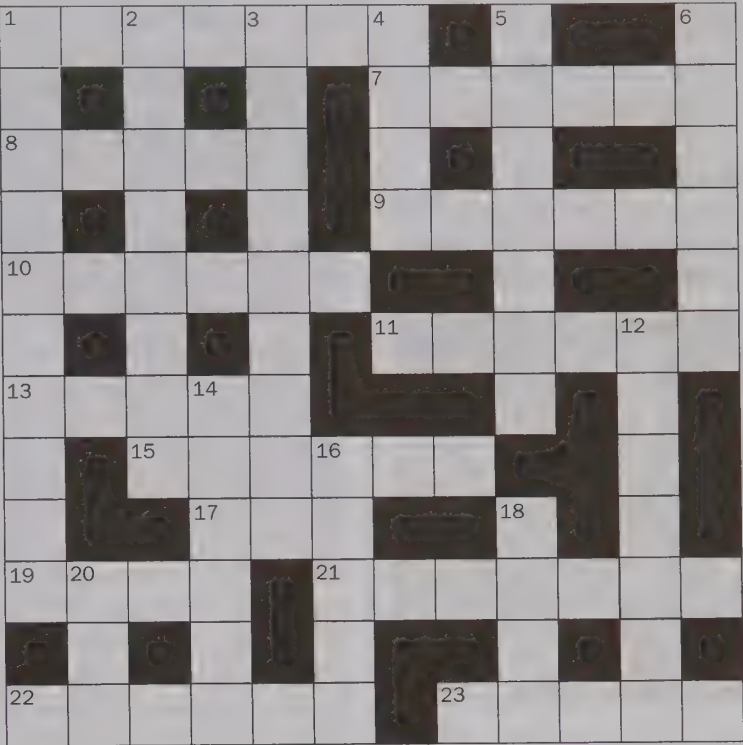
1. What is tazza?
2. Who said, "Genius is 1 per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration"?
3. Which of these composers set the story of Romeo and Juliet to music? Was it Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Berlioz or Bernstein?
4. Who wrote the *Jewel in the Crown*?
5. Who commanded the Indian forces at the Battle of the Little Bighorn?
6. What is an inhabitant of Oxford called?
7. A bundle of rods tied with an axe in the middle was the emblem of which political movement?
8. How many complaints did Luther list and nail on Wittenburg Castle church door?
9. Who wrote, "O my love's like a red, red rose that's newly sprung in June"?

Answers on page 31.

DN's crossword

Answers on page 31

COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



ACROSS

- 1,8. Learning difficulties (7,5)
7. Quiet road (6)
8. See 1 across
9. Power generator (6)
10. Whatever (6)
11. Simple text book (6)
13. Smallest (5)
15. Cowardly? (6)
17. Yes (dialect) (3)
19. North and Caspian, for example (4)
21. Reap sap (anag)

22. Brief look (6)

23. Long look (5)

DOWN

1. Sauna talcs (anag) (5,5)
2. Ordinary (8)
3. Nasty lint (anag)
4. Unable to walk properly (4)
5. Antarctic bird (7)
6. Varnish (6)
12. Ruler of many countries (7)
14. Spring, for example (6)
16. Depart (5)
18. Cause to become better (4)
20. Long slippery fish (3)



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## Bright ideas

### Hayley Kerr brings you the brightest buys of the month

Reader Vic Green, from East Sussex, has developed a mobile phone adaptor which attaches to the phone with screws, clips



or a cradle. Using larger keys spaced further apart, it makes for easier use. Key size and shape can vary, be colour-coded, concave or in Braille. Call Vic on (01323) 645958.

Franks Accessories has developed the Backbeater to alleviate lower back pain. A harness attached to the back pad fits around your knees, providing constant back support no matter how long you sit. Distributed by Cathguard, it



costs less than £50 including VAT. Tel: (01329) 828007.

New from Carver, the Caravan Mover makes light work of hitching a caravan to a vehicle. Steering is done via a four-directional hand control, so that the user is well clear during manoeuvring. Caravan Mover can pull 1200 kg up a slope in wet or dry conditions. £787. Tel: 0121-428 1133.

Have your fast food at home with the new Triple Cooker from Microwise Cookware. Use the three dishes separately or all together to cook an entire meal in one go. Available at most homeware stores, it costs £9.99. Microwise Cookware: (01869) 248239.

Do readers have bright ideas to share here? Please send them in to *DN*, address on page 2.

## Look out for

The Lawrence Batley Theatre is hosting *Beyond Limits*, an exhibition of national artists whose experiences include disability. Running until 16 August at the LBT, Queen's Street, Huddersfield HD1 2SP, it's accessible during theatre opening hours, 10am-10pm.

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival is on from 10-30 August hosting the usual wide range of creative arts. Of particular interest for disabled people will be *Departed Soul* by Taihen (11-16 August); six disabled performers exploring the theme "the amusement of life is an offering to the invisible" (Venue 62). The Lawnmowers perform *The Right Wrong* (19-23 August) – a group of people with learning difficulties try to change parliament (Venue 197). Alex Milligan is hosting *I to I* (11-29 August, not Sundays), an exhibition of tactile art involving touch, sight, sound and light (Venue 194). For information, tel: 0131-226 5257. For tickets, tel: 0131-226 5138.

## Independent Living Show

Independent Living South East is being held at Sandown Exhibition Centre, Esher, Surrey on 7-8 August. For your free entry call the ticket hotline on (01275) 836465. All stands are sold out, so visitors can expect to see many new products on display, including purpose design kitchens from Haydn Care, a division of Chiltern Invadex, and everyday items for independent living by Promedics.

The show also hosts over 14 free seminars for both public and professionals (first come first served basis). Topics include Specialisms with Occupational Therapy, The Challenges and Opportunities of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Disabled Sports – the possibilities with guest speaker Tanni Grey.

Independent Living North will be held at Doncaster Racecourse (25-26 September). Companies wishing to exhibit should call (01275) 831754.

Two shows are arranged for 1998. One is in Manchester on 18-19 March, and one at Wembley in London on 9-10 September.

## Artyfacts

The Dark Horse Venture, Liverpool, a national organisation helping elderly people become involved in activities, are creating a three-year project in the North West to develop musical, drama and dance opportunities. Contact Barbara Eckersley at Kelton,

Woodlands Road, Liverpool L17 0AN, tel: 0151-729 0092. (See also page 12 for Camelot grant.)

ACME are providing low-cost working and living space for visual artists. Twelve three year residencies are on offer, three with bursary awards. The closing date for applications is 5 September. For an information/application form, send an A4 sae (49p stamp) to ACME Studios Housing Association, PO Box 14781, London E3 4SH. (Large print, braille and tape available.)

## Subscription winners

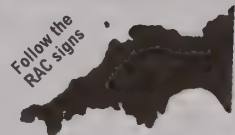
Congratulations to the following new subscribers who have won Whitbread Leisure Vouchers given away with our June 1997 issue coupon:

D Smalley from Hatfield, Somerset; J Skitteral from Yeovil, Somerset; Mrs Bargent from Battersea, London; K Hunt from Southampton, Hampshire; B Willer from Ryde, Isle of Wight; C Gladding from Southampton, Hampshire; S Rose from Kempston, Bedfordshire; T Davies from Cleaton Moor, Cumbria; P Geddes from Inverurie, Aberdeenshire; and S McNaulty from Carnforth, Lancashire.

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### SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND Independent Lifestyle Show 28-29th August 1997

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## Help!

Readers of *DN* needed to help in thesis, *The implications of the DDA 1995 on 3 star/independently owned hotels – in terms of accessibility*. Questions to be answered include: With the implementation of the DDA, has there been an improvement in the reduction of physical barriers? Do you perceive the DDA to be effective to your needs, or has the DDA ignored the needs of disabled people? Do you have any suggestions for smaller independent hoteliers to improve accessibility for disabled people? If you can help, contact Joanna Lewis, The Sett, 1 Badgers Way, Marlow Bottom, Bucks SL7 3QU.

I am an occupational therapy (OT) student researching services for disabled parents. If you have a child under 5 years, use a wheelchair and have had contact with a social services OT, please could you help. I would like to interview you for 3/4 hour to find out your experience of OT services. Please ring Diane Stevens on (01442) 392309 for more information. If you give me your number, I will ring you back to keep the cost at a minimum for you.

## For sale

**HAND CONTROLS SUITABLE** for Volvo 340, auto but can be adapted to fit most small autos, cost £240 but will accept £100 ono. Tel: (01634) 719908 (Rochester, Kent).

**BOOSTER TOWN/COUNTRY** scooter. Good condition £900 ono. Tel: (01268) 479663.

**ELECTRIC SCOOTER, EVEREST** & Jennings. New batteries with drive unit. Good condition, £350. Tel: 0121-745 1938.

**ESCORT 1600 LX**, H reg, auto, 1100 miles. Electric chair and hoist fitted to passenger side. Modified dashboard. £5500. Tel: (01582) 608191.

**POWERTEC F15 ELECTRIC** wheelchair with all accessories. As new, cost £1895, will take £950. Tel: 0181-698 6219.

**1. LEVO ELECTRIC** stand-up chair in excellent condition. **2. ELAP** rotating seat. Will accept any reasonable offers. Tel: 0171-266 0212.

**SUNRISE MEDICAL** scoota, model Sterling Four GL (4 wheels), blue, including battery charger. 1 year old, little used, as new. Cost £2940, accept £1900 ono. Tel: 0181-668 2988.

**FIAT FIORINO, DIESEL**, rear door entry, 15 months with 4300 miles since purchase, 1450 total. Also Oxford 125 hoist and Hirsteller intercare electric hoist, specifically for toileting, each complete with ext' bars slings for transferring, toileting and other needs. Have been used solely on home care. £7000, £750, £1700. Tel: (01581) 600222.

**ORTHOKINETICS 2745** recliner lift chair with massager. Excellent condition, as new. Must sell £1200 ono. Tel: (01455) 637854.

**ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR**, unused Powertec F15, £1500. Tel: 0181-906 4579.

**ORTHOKINETIC ELECTRIC** chair, reclining and rising to standing position. Blue draylon. Cost £795, used one week £495. Tel: (01604) 493393 (Northampton).

**ELECTRIC RECLINING** armchair, lift and tilt, gold draylon. Suitable for shorter person, £600 ono. Tel: (01825) 872901 (East Sussex).

**Continued on page 32**

#### TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. A shallow ornamental bowl or cup mounted on a base.
2. Thomas Edison.
3. All of them.
4. Paul Scott.
5. Chief Sitting Bull and Chief Crazy Horse.
6. Oxonian. 7. Fascist.
8. Ninety-five.
9. Robert Burns.

#### CROSSWORD ANSWERS

- ACROSS: 1. Special  
7. Avenue 8. Needs 9. Engine  
10. Anyway 11. Primer  
13. Least 15. Yellow 17. Aye  
19. Seas 21. Appears  
22. Glance 23. Glare  
DOWN: 1. Santa Claus  
2. Everyday 3. Instantly  
4. Lane 5. Penguin 6. Veneer  
12. Emperor 14. Season  
16. Leave 18. Heal 20. Eel



# My furry friend is a godsend

Jill Brown's life has been transformed by her hard-working canine companion

I can't think how I lived before I had Astrid, my assistance dog. I certainly couldn't face the future without her.

I was heartbroken when my parent's dog died, but because of my progressive muscle weakness, we realised we couldn't cope with a new family pet.

I am now on my own, and when I heard about Dogs for the Disabled, I put my name on the waiting list in June 1993.

However, it wasn't until February 1995 that the charity gave me a call to say they had a dog for me which might be suitable.

I didn't know what to expect, but when I saw Astrid I lost my heart to her.

A lot of their dogs are rejects from other places and Astrid had been trained by Guide Dogs for the Blind, but it hadn't worked out as she was too timid. She was passed on to Dogs for the Disabled which worked with her for six months and trained her for someone who was in a wheelchair, like me.

George Cram, from the



Animal magic: Astrid goes everywhere with Jill – and is a friend as well as a lifeline

SALISBURY JOURNAL

Exeter office, came to my house for training and he taught me Astrid's commands and how to control, feed and groom her, and generally gain her confidence and trust.

We did most of the training indoors and then ventured out to my usual haunts – the Cathedral, hospital swimming pool and the bank.

Two weeks after the first visit, the charity checked we were getting on alright. I was given a

test and was delighted to pass. Astrid was my dog and I paid £1 for her.

I have now enjoyed two years of her wonderful company.

She has learnt many new tasks and can retrieve practically anything I drop or want. She will pull off my cardigan or trousers, fetch the post, and her latest skill is to open a latch gate on one of our regular routes.

I've even made her a doggy

backpack which she wears around the house, carrying my mobile phone and books, so it saves her running about so much.

I cannot go shopping on my own so I always take Astrid to my local stores in Salisbury. She will reach up to the counter and hand my purse to the shop assistant or the prescription to the chemist.

We also go to college and last year studied history, which she seemed to find boring as she slept throughout tutorials.

I don't exactly understand how she knows what I want her to do – it's partly the context, partly my body language. For example, I will shake my arm and say "pull" when I want her to take my jumper off.

Nothing can compare with her affectionate licks and tail wags when I am feeling unwell. She will lie by my bed and look really worried if I am not up

and about with her. That cheerful tail swoosh and hip wobble, together with numerous wet licks, is a wonderful tonic.

It is no good being in a hurry when I go out, because so many people want to stop us for a chat. I have to ask them not to distract us when Astrid is on duty as it isn't fair to her and hinders her concentration.

The rapport is wonderful between us and I couldn't think of life without Astrid now.

She is such a willing and uncomplaining helper as well as a wonderful companion. I hope that she likes her life as much as I enjoy sharing my life with her.

I look forward to many years with her as my faithful friend, helper and companion.

*Dogs for the Disabled, The Old Vicarage, London Road, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry, Warwickshire CB8 3ER, tel: (01203) 302050.*



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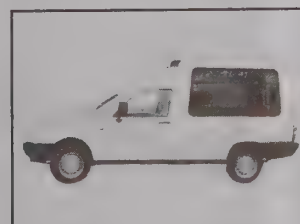
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**LARK 4 ELECTRIC** scooter, 4 wheels, one year old, excellent condition, £1200. Tel: (01932) 564493.

**MANGAR FREESTYLE INDOOR** wheelchair, electric rising seat, cost £4000, will accept £1150. Tel: 0181-958 2406.

**SUNGIFT EAGLE POWERED** chair. Six months old, used once, eighteen months warranty remaining. Bargain at £3,000, originally £4,940. Tel: 0181-340 7366 or 0181 524 0101 (evenings).

**ACTION LIGHTWEIGHT CHAIR** 16", mudguards, stabilisers, collapsable. Very good condition, £600 ono. Tel: (01252) 617645.

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**VITESSE 2000 RECLINER** electric wheelchair with right foot control. Very good condition, £1,500. Tel: (01978) 365565 (North Wales).

**"BOOSTER" 3 WHEEL** town and country scooter, 14" wheels, as new, £1,500. No offers. Tel: (01745) 345006.

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**SHY LEO MALE,** 37, divorced, likes cooking, eating in and out, all music from 70s to 90s, travelling. Visually impaired. Would like to meet lady of similar age, non smoker. Box No. 102

**MALE, 22, WITH CP,** walks with crutches. I have my own car, flat and I have a job. I am looking for a lady (20-24), for friendship/relationship. Must be a non-smoker, who has similar interests as pubs/clubs, music, cars etc, disabled or not. London or Essex area. Box No. 103

**I AM A 55** year old male, non-smoker, paraplegic and I am looking for two non-smoking female companions, 40-45, for a

camping adventure abroad, leaving May '98. Either slightly disabled or able bodied. Sharing expenses. Box No. 104

**SCREWY SCORPIO LADY** with vgsoh. Early to middle thirties. Interests include motor racing, playing scrabble, animals (ie my pet dog), listening to music, watching films and videos, and good nights in and out. Looking for that someone special to share the good and bad times in life. Box No. 108

**MALE AGED 51** disabled by brain haemorrhage 6 years ago. Lives alone in idyllic country location. Former Polytechnic lecturer. Now works for newly elected Labour MP. Looking for female friend to share interests and social life with. Enjoys reading, walks (in powered wheelchair), cinema, theatre, gardens and meeting people. GSOH important. Box No. 106

## Video top five

- 1. DAYLIGHT (CIC):** Sylvester Stallone in a 90's disaster.
- 2. SLEEPERS (Polygram):** Brad Pitt revenging childhood abuse.
- 3. THE FIRST WIVES' CLUB (CIC):** Goldie Hawn and gang find life after divorce.
- 4. ROALD DAHL'S MATHILDA (Columbia Tristar):** will be loved by everybody.
- 5. THE CRAFT (Columbia Tristar):** three teenage witches get crafty.

Chart supplied by MIRB.


## Holidays

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**SHOREFIELD COUNTRY PARK,** Downton, Hampshire: Award winning coastal site with indoor/outdoor pools; sports/leisure facilities; restaurants and bars. Wheelchair accessible, fully equipped 1/2 bedroom chalets, sleep 4-6. Call: K. Pepper on 01590 642073 - New Forest Mencap Charity No. 1038962.

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**Pam Dixon-Adeyemi,**  
Year Zero Co-ordinator,  
NEWTEC, 22 Deanery Road,  
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**Brittany Cottage** to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details **C. Hodgson. Tel (01924) 454300.**

**LLETY MIERI LLANDEILO, WEST WALES**  
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Continued on pgs 33 & 35

## What's in DN next month?



- MOBILITY ROADSHOW**  
Missed it? Want to learn what the experts say? Read DN's review.
- FASHION - back to school**  
Kit your kids out for the new term.
- GETTING A JOB (5)**  
Spotlight on sheltered employment
- CITY FOCUS: CARDIFF**  
A look across the Severn.

Plus the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 28 August.

## Scope conference

*Disability - A Shared Agenda?* is the title of Scope's national conference, run in conjunction with the All Round Ability exhibition at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool, 6-8 November 1997.

Covering important issues, such as direct payments, community care, disability and democracy, and the Disability Discrimination Act, the conference will have well-known speakers including Jane Campbell of the Independent Living Foundation, Roy Taylor of the Association of Directors of Social Services, and Colin Low of the RNIB. Equal Opportunities Minister Andrew Smith will be there too. Seminars and workshops will be supported by an exhibition of information and products, and by demonstrations.

To take part as a visitor or exhibitor, and for further information, fill in the coupon on page 11.

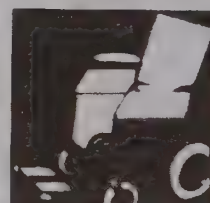
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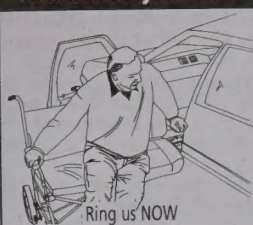
**0181 569 8955**

Units 1-4, Shield Drive, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9EX



## For sale

Having trouble getting in & out of your car?



Ring us NOW  
**GOWRINGS MOBILITY**  
**0800 220878**

## MERCEDES-BENZ and VOLKSWAGEN Wheelchair Accessible Conversions

CoTrim specialises in wheelchair accessible conversions for both Mercedes V-Class and Vitos, and Volkswagen Caravelles. We are a recognised Mercedes Body Builder and Volkswagen Compatible Design Converter. We are also a recognised installer of many leading makes of lifts and ramps including AMF, Ricon, PLS and Rocliff.

In addition we carry out customised upholstery conversions, for example cloth to leather, to high standards.  
**CoTrim**  
Personalised Vehicle Conversions  
COMMITMENT TO QUALITY  
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## HOIST'S

for lifting wheelchairs, scooters and people into cars...

**WE HAVE THE ANSWER!**

Ring 01629-813493 for brochure or free demo  
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Autochair Ltd Milford Lane Bakewell DE45 1DX

## WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE REGISTER

**ARE YOU HAVING PROBLEMS LOCATING THE USED VEHICLE YOU NEED OR DISPOSING OF YOUR EXISTING VEHICLE?**

Register your requirements or vehicle for sale with the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Register and let us match buyer with seller. For full details of this service telephone **(01202) 814112**

## COTSWOLD COTS

Build Cots and Beds for Adults and Children with Special Needs

We Design And Build Any Cot or Bed You Need.

**New Products** Extra Strong Playpens. Extra Large Stairgates. Fitted Padded Play Areas.

High Quality Fair prices  
Information Phone 01993 842885



\* Walking sticks \* Rainwear \* Tyres \* Batteries \* Grab rails \* Scooters \* Wheelchairs \* Riser chairs \* Stairlifts etc etc

Equipment bought and sold  
Sales, service, hire

**D & K Mobility**, 62, Hollybush Road, Gravesend, Tel: 01474 353837 Mon-Fri 10-5 Sat 10-3. Closed Thursday.

Continued on page 34

Holidays continued

Holidays in France for disabled people

**AUBERGE DE LA TOUR**  
Small family run farmhouse/guesthouse in rural France, Loire Valley/Vendee area. English qualified nurse proprietor. Respite care available on request. Adapted minibus for transportation.

For brochure contact Mr & Mrs Bartlam, 40 Rue St Eloi, Courlay, 79440 Deux Sevres, France. (00.33) 5.49.72.25.37. or English tel. contact Heather Bacon 01395 267084.

## Bursaries

### STUDENT BURSARIES

#### MSc Disability Studies

Our course explores the field of disability from a range of social science perspectives. It aims to generate research that will highlight the experiences of people with disabilities and challenge the position of disabled people in society.

**A number of bursaries of £2,000 are available, principally for disabled students, to cover course fees and some additional expenses.**

The course can be followed on a full-time (one year) or part-time (two or three year) basis.

**Closing date for application: 5th September 1997**

For further details contact Nick Pike in the School of Health and Community Studies on 01962 827283.

**King Alfred's Winchester**  
a University sector College



The Institution is a registered charity and exists solely to provide education facilities in the community.

## Tenders

### NATIONAL DISABILITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Employment Service wishes to encourage further the involvement of the private and voluntary sectors and other public organisations in the development of new ways of providing vocational services for people with a wide range of long term health conditions or disabilities which put them at a significant disadvantage in finding or keeping a job. New approaches to assist the recruitment or retention of individuals and to promote the implementation of good policies and practice are an important aspect of development strategy.

The Employment Service currently provides disability services throughout the country through a network of Placing, Assessment and Counselling Teams (PACTs), which are supported by nine Regional Disability Services. The main focus of the work is on face-to-face interaction with disabled clients, providing information and advice, agreeing actions on job search and facilitating access to a range of programmes and services, including Employment Rehabilitation and Access to Work, to help people with disabilities find or keep work. PACTs also promote the Disability Symbol good practice initiative to employers.

A nationally co-ordinated approach to the development of Disability Services is being implemented through the National Disability Development Initiative (NDDI). The initiative will commission projects aimed at developing innovative methods of meeting the employment needs of people with disabilities.

A key aim of the NDDI is to foster partnership working between ES Disability Services and other agencies and organisations to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Bidding for NDDI development work is open to:

- external organisations (private, public and not-for-profit);
- partnerships of external organisations; and
- partnerships of external organisations and ES Regional Disability Services.

The focus for the first tranche of development work will be on projects with an innovative approach to:

- identifying client needs;
- assessing client's capacities and inclinations;
- preparing clients for work or training, or returning to their employer (including counselling and personal development;
- helping clients into work.

If you would like more information about NDDI, please contact Susie Robson no later than 15 August 1997, at Employment Service Regional Disability Services, Eagleswood Business Park, Woodlands Lane, Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS12 4EU on 01454 619141 ext 104. Textphone 01454 618527. She will send you a Bidding Pack.

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Serving People through Jobcentres

### GAER COTTAGES

"1993 HOLIDAY CARE AWARD WINNERS"

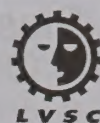
Quality self-catering cottages for ALL the family with an emphasis on facilities for disabled visitors. 6 of the 9 traditional Welsh stone cottages are single storey, easily accessible from the car park. WTB Top Grading 5 Dragons. Luxurious indoor heated swimming pool with hoist. Games room. Open ALL YEAR. Groups welcome. For colour brochure telephone:

**RICHARD & LINDA BURGESS**  
01570 470275

### JUBILEE LODGE - Essex

Purpose built holiday centre. Epping Forest, Cambridge. Southend nearby. 26 single en-suite rooms. 5 twin rooms. CTV. Motorized hoists. Bar. Conservatory. Coffee lounge. Visits/entertainment included. Help buttons. Nurses/volunteer support. Social Services registered. From £235 pw. For brochure call: 0171 833 4579 ext. 132

Recruitment (continued on pages 34 & 35)



## LONDON VOLUNTARY SERVICE COUNCIL

LVSC strengthens the voluntary sector in London by providing it with support services and giving it a loud and clear voice on issues that affect Londoners. We are now seeking to fill the following positions:

#### POLICY OFFICER (One Year Fixed-Term Contract to 30.9.98)

Salary £20,994 - £22,095 pa (Ref:PD/97/2)

Essential post requirements include two years experience of developing policy, analysing and responding to policy, liaison across sectors and planning and organising events.

#### LONDON COMMUNITY CARE POLICY CO-ORDINATOR (Three Year Fixed-Term Contract)

Salary £21,546 - £24,252 pa (Ref:PD/97/3)

This post is being advertised in conjunction with the London Network of Community Care Development Officers.

Essential post requirements include an in depth understanding of community care legislation and its implications and opportunities for the voluntary sector, extensive experience of policy development and strategic representation and liaison, and the ability to service and work effectively for a network of professional staff.

#### INFORMATION OFFICER (Maternity Cover - minimum six months)

Salary £19,332 - £22,095 pa (Ref: ID/97/3)

Essential post requirements include experience of providing a reference library service, carrying out basic research including questionnaires and surveys, developing and implementing information storage, keeping accurate records and using a computerised database for information storage and retrieval.

The ability and willingness to integrate equal opportunity issues into all aspects of the work are essential for all posts. For a job description and full person specification for each post please contact Genevieve Haywood at LVSC, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA. Telephone 0171 700 8107.

**THE CLOSING DATE FOR ALL POSTS IS 10 A.M. ON THURSDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 1997**

#### CONSULTANT (Ref:PD/97/4)

To work on enabling increased voluntary sector input and involvement in a collaborative project to develop a model of sustainable regeneration for London. Will include interpretation and analysis of policy documents, policy development, consultation processes and facilitation, writing briefings and reports. Please contact Genevieve Haywood at LVSC by 4.00pm on 14th August 1997 and quote the above reference for the tender documents.

LVSC is an Equal Opportunities Employer. The building is wheelchair accessible and cycle parking is available.

LVSC receives funding from the London Boroughs Grants Committee  
Registered Charity Number 276886.

### DIRECTORATE OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

#### PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL

### ACCESS OFFICER

**£13,581 - £16,404 pa (salary award due) + essential user car allowance**

We are seeking an enthusiastic and self-motivated person qualified to HNC level in Building Construction or related discipline, with a sound knowledge of disabilities.

You will have responsibilities for liaison with Council Departments, local access groups, the public and building professionals on matters relating to disabled people and accessibility of the built environment.

The Council is committed to the provision of access and facilities for disabled people and takes an active role in the implementation and promotion of the Disability Discrimination Act.

**Application forms and further details are available from the Personnel and Performance Management Department, Mansfield District Council, Civic Centre, Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG19 7BH. Tel: (01623) 663005. Please quote reference 3435. Closing date: 8 August 1997.**

**The Council is committed to equal opportunities and welcomes applications irrespective of race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, gender and sexual orientation, religion, marital status, disability or age.**



**MANSFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

*Working for the future*

## NOW AVAILABLE

**SELF CATERING & HOTEL ACCOMMODATION**

**Specially designed for disabled people.**

**IN THE U.K., IRELAND, EUROPE & U.S.A.**

**Telephone:**

**01708 863198**

**and speak to: Tony or Josie**

Continued on page 35

### WINGED FELLOWSHIP TOURS

Overseas holidays for people with disabilities. Holland, Eire, Channel Islands, France, Switz, Norway, Czech, Majorca, USA etc. Prices include flights, travel in adapted vehicles, accessible accommodation, nurse/couriers. Also UK budget "Discovery" holidays. All destinations accessible. Brochure from Gary Day: 0171 833 4579 ext 122.

### NAISH HOLIDAY VILLAGE:

Fully equipped, 2 bedroomed log cabin accommodation. Sleeps 6, well furnished and totally wheelchair accessible. Cliff-top park with "excellent" status. New Milton, Hampshire. Excellent site facilities within 100 yards, with indoor/outdoor pools, restaurant, bar, take-away. Free club membership. Vacancies: Sept-Oct.

### GRANGE COURT HOLIDAY VILLAGE:

Fully wheelchair accessible spacious 2 bedroomed, new, mobile home. Sleeps 4-6, well appointed and furnished. Purchased from National Lottery funds. Park with "good" status, Goodrington Sands, Devon. Excellent site facilities within short walk, with indoor/outdoor pools, restaurant, bar, take-away. Free club membership. Vacancies: Aug-Oct.

Details: Mr P. Cash 01425 672055 - Bournemouth Spina Bifida Association, registered charity No. 261914.



## Recruitment

Part time, self employed helper/facilitator for a young lady with cerebral palsy living in the Ruislip area. Must be aged between 25/38. Non-smoker - driver. For more information, phone: 01895 473524.

## Personal



**A dating agency designed for people with disabilities and is open to discerning able bodied people.**

**Tel/Fax 01473 226950**

Lonely, bored and fed up? Why not give Handicate a try?

Handicate, The Wellington Centre, 52 Chevellier Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2PB  
Member of ABIA

## Find a friend



**Find-A-Friend**

Anybody - Any Age - Anywhere  
Able-bodied or Disabled  
Choose Your Own Ideal Relationship

**MUTUAL ESSENTIAL LINKS**

1 Weir Street, Northwich,  
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Tel/Fax: (24 hrs) UK 01606 49093  
Overseas +44 + 1606 49093

## Motor insurance

### The "Access" Policy

A unique contract specially designed for owners of vehicles converted to carry wheelchair passengers. Substantial premium savings - up to 30% possible.

**For a quote please contact**

**CHARD INSURANCE SERVICES (REGISTERED BROKERS), 15 HOLYROOD STREET, CHARD TA20 2AH.**  
01460 61373/62148

## For sale continued



Lightweight Wheelchairs  
Spares, Servicing & Repairs  
Powerchairs and Scooters  
Homecare Products

Personal Service  
Credit Cards accepted  
Phone for a Catalogue:

**01252 547939**

or visit our showroom  
43 Alexandra Road, Farnborough,  
Hants GU14 6BS  
Ramp at rear and free car park  
A company run by the disabled  
- for the disabled!

**Save Money Now!** VanFare, USA is a tetraplegic owned company specialising in new and previously owned adapted mini or full size vans for disabled driver, passenger or group transport.  
Contact: VanFare, USA at 11 School St., Essex, MA 01929 USA.  
Phone: 1-508-768-6228,  
Fax: 1-508 768-6404.  
After 9/97 change 508 to 978.  
E-mail: vanfare@tiac.net  
http://www.tiac.net/users/vanfare

### Directions Plus Publications Officer

Local Government Scale 5, salary £13,581, full-time for three years. Pay award pending.

**Directions Plus** is the Cambridge and Ely area's information and advice service for disabled people and carers.

We are seeking a disabled person, a carer or somebody with other experience of disability, to fill this post, funded by the National Lottery Charities Board.

The post-holder will produce, over three years, a series of handbooks and other publications in a range of media, for different groups of disabled people and carers. These will include a disabled person's handbook, factsheets, newsletters, publicity leaflets, Web pages, Braille, audio tapes, material in minority languages and videos.

We need someone with excellent writing skills and experience of producing publications in print, with the ability to liaise effectively with printers and designers. Good word-processing skills essential, knowledge of desk-top publishing and design desirable. The post would suit someone with an interest in information/advice, and a knowledge of rights, services and benefits for disabled people.

**Closing date, Friday August 22nd: Interviews Monday September 8th.**

**Contact Directions Plus, 72/74 Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8DZ (Tel 01223 360808) for an application pack.**  
(Registered Charity No. 1054543)



### BRISTOL ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND GENERAL MANAGER (Designate) NJC Scales (42-44)

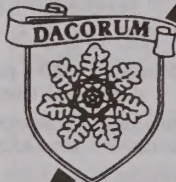
We are seeking a committed experienced person to manage the Society's Bristol Royal Workshops for the Blind. Well established, the Workshop provides supported employment for people with disabilities, and specialises in products which are highly regarded. These include engineering components, furniture refurbishment, PVCu windows, door fabrication and corrugated plastic containers.

Application Form and relevant information from: The Director, Dept WM, BRSB, Stillhouse Lane, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 4EB. Tel: 0117 953 7750.

**Closing date: 15th August.**

Committed to Equality at Work and in Services

### DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL



Planning Department

### Disability Employment Development Worker

**£16,087 - £17,025 for a 37 hour week**  
(pay award pending)

(one year fixed term contract)

Dacorum covers the towns and villages of Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring in the Chiltern Hills of Hertfordshire. Providing excellent communication links, it is also a pleasant place to live and work.

As part of the Council's economic development initiative, this post is aimed at eliminating the barriers, discrimination and ignorance which prevent adults with all types of disabilities from obtaining employment.

You will liaise with and offer advice to local employers and agencies to obtain and maintain employment and training opportunities. You will offer ongoing practical support, information and advice to clients (one to one or in groups) to enable them to look for and stay in paid employment.

Educated to at least A level standard with experience and knowledge of the target group, you must also have counselling skills, knowledge of IT and ideally an understanding of local government activities.

Further information from Bob Cutts, Economic Development Officer on (01442) 228630.

Application form and job description from Mrs Andy Paul, Planning Department, Civic Centre, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1HH. Tel: (01442) 228583.

**Closing date: 22 August 1997. Interviews week commencing: 1 September 1997.**



**Minicom users can contact us on (01442) 228656.**

*We are working towards being an equal opportunities employer. Candidates with a disability who meet the essential criteria will be interviewed.*



### Administrative Officer required TICKET AND ESCORT SERVICE

**Part-time 17.5 hours. Salary £11,500 - £12,900 (pro rata).**

Arts About Manchester is the arts marketing consortium for Greater Manchester. A well organised Disabled person who is quick to learn is sought to assist the development of the Ticket and Escort Service. Working within a small team you will assist the Ticket and Escort Service Manager to provide an effective and efficient administrative system. Good computer and communication skills and diplomacy are essential for this post.

For written details please send an SAE, stating if you require details in Braille, large print or audio format to: 23 New Mount Street, Manchester, M4 4DE. Please no CVs. Applications to be received by Friday 29th August, interviews w/c Thursday 11th September. This post is only open to Disabled applicants.

*Arts About Manchester is striving to be an equal opportunities employer*

This post is funded by: North West Arts Board, European Regional Development Fund, Manchester Health Authority, Esmee Fairburn Trust, AGMA.

### CENTRAL TRAINING OFFICE

## Training Associates

We are looking for 6 experienced Training Associates to work with our Corporate Training Section, providing an in-house learning and staff development consultancy.

The job will involve a wide range of activities; from running courses and identifying training needs to one-to-one consultancy, the development of new initiatives and the writing of reports.

What's more, we will guarantee you 20 days' work, at £350.00 per day.

Naturally, then, we are looking for people who have a proven track record of facilitating small and large groups. You will understand the need for knowledge covering the following subject areas: NVQ's, Investor-in-People, Team development, Action Learning, Equal Opportunities and Disability Awareness. A knowledge of psychometric testing would also be useful but isn't an essential. Above all, you should be committed to the concept of training within the broader context of learning and the learning organisation.

So if you would like to apply, please write enclosing your cv to Ray Mahoney, Learning and Development Manager, Central Training Office, Corporation of London, P O Box 270, Guildhall, London EC2P 2EJ. Tel: 0171 332 1394.

**Closing date: 4th August 1997.**

SERVING THE SQUARE MILE



### COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE & TOWN CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (DISABLED PEOPLE)

#### SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

**£19,269 - £20,766 (Pay Award Pending) REF: CENT/61/97**  
**FIXED TERM TEMPORARY CONTRACT UNTIL**  
**31ST MARCH 2000**

We are seeking a person with a strong commitment to and an understanding of the social model of disability and independent living to establish a network of disabled people. This will give local disabled people a representative voice in consultations and determining service delivery particularly with Coventry City Council and Coventry Health Authority.

You will have good communication and enabling skills, an understanding of disabling barriers within society and previous experience of development work with disabled people. You will work within a team committed to the furtherance of equality of opportunity.

**Application form and further particulars from Central Services Personnel, 1st Floor, Christchurch House, Greyfriars Lane, Coventry CV1 5RR, or by telephoning (01203) 833771.**

**Closing date: 25th August 1997.**

- Disabled people who fully meet the person specification will be guaranteed an interview.
- Large print application forms are available on request.



**WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY**

**Deadlines for the September issue of Disability Now:**  
**Booking deadline is 8 August, copy deadline is 12 August**



## Recruitment

### STATE OF THE ART RESOURCE CENTRE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

# DESIGNED BY SPECIALISTS BUILT BY EXPERTS

**Team Leaders** £17,652 - £21,464  
**Senior Project Workers** £15,510 - £18,518  
**Project Workers** £13,923 - £16,641

**W**e're very excited about the new day-care centre we're building. We used architects who specialise in access problems and we brought them together with people with disabilities and sensory impairment. We listened to their ideas, and asked for their suggestions at every stage of the process.

And the result? A state of the art building which will set the standard for building for people with disabilities for years to come. Special features include a hydrotherapy pool, and a range of counselling and vocational training services will be available. We think this is possibly the most exciting opportunity disability care professionals will ever be presented with.

At Westminster we have a well established service, with highly qualified and experienced staff. We encourage new ideas and innovation and reward enthusiasm. Our strong commitment to training means we can offer a great career structure, and fast-track development is a real possibility. Interested?

#### Team Leaders ref: SS/62E

Supervise and support your team, and ensure the delivery of a high quality, user focused service.

Educated to degree, or equivalent standard, preferably with a relevant professional qualification, you must have good supervisory skills and at least three years social care experience working with people with disabilities (either day or community based).

#### Senior Project Workers ref: SS/63E

Provide guidance, deliver the best possible care and take responsibility for an agreed area of specialism.

You must have specialist experience, an appropriate qualification, a good understanding of the needs of people with disabilities and sensory impairments and a commitment to further training.

#### Project Workers ref: SS/64E

Educated to 'A' level standard or equivalent, you must be committed to further training and have relevant experience in a social care environment.

Benefits include: • generous annual leave • free swimming facilities • staff discount card • excellent pension scheme • interest free season ticket loan.

For further information, or an informal chat, please contact Ron Church on 0171 727 1429.

Salaries are inclusive of all shift allowances (pay award pending).

#### Other languages

Westminster provides services to people from a wide range of backgrounds and we are particularly keen to recruit people who can speak Urdu, Chinese and/or Arabic.

For an application form please telephone 0171 641 1996 or 0171 641 1997. Closing date for all posts is Wednesday 13th August 1997.

**City of Westminster**

THE COUNCIL OPERATES A NO SMOKING AT WORK POLICY. AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



## Holidays continued

#### THE STACKPOLE CENTRE

UNIQUE HOLIDAY COMPLEX ON THE SOUTH PEMBROKESHIRE COAST FOR FAMILIES, GROUPS & INDIVIDUALS: SELF-CATERING, COTTAGES, GROUP HOUSES & HOTEL (Wales Tourist Board 3 Crowns Highly Commended) POOL, JACUZZI, THEATRE, RESTAURANT, ART, POTTERY & MUSIC ROOMS, OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE LEVEL 1  
 For info & Holiday Pack, Tel: 01646 661425  
 Fax: 01646 661456

#### Blagdon Farm Country Holidays Devon/Cornwall border

Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of glorious countryside. Many on-site facilities including tea room/shop. Take-away meals and equipment hire available. Tourist Board Highly Commended.  
 For colour brochure please contact:  
 Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm,  
 Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF.  
 Phone: 01409 211509. Fax 01409 211510.

#### S.E. SPAIN

Purpose built ground floor holiday apartments. Two bedrooms, pool, patio area, shower chair, hoist. Towels/Linen included.  
 Sandy beaches, relaxing and pleasant holiday for Disabled person and their Carer.  
 Please write/phone/fax: Lisa Fowler,  
 RAYMAR, Unit 1, Fairview Estate, Reading Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1HE.  
 Telephone: 01491 578446; Fax: 01491 413741

#### GLEBE FARM HOLIDAYS SELF-CATERING COTTAGES FOR THE DISABLED

Glebe Farm, Charles Brayford,  
 Nr. Barnstaple, North Devon EX32 7PT  
 Telephone: 01598 710241  
 Open all year. Wheelchair accessible.  
 Equipment available.  
 Please contact: Valerie Boddington

Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.

Disability Now is also available on tape. For details, contact Subscriptions at 16 Fitzroy Square, London, W1P 6LP or telephone 0171-383 4575.





## UNIVERSAL MOBILITY LTD

SUPERIOR VEHICLE CONVERSIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WISHING TO TRAVEL IN THEIR OWN WHEELCHAIRS. MOST AVAILABLE ON MOTABILITY  
CALL OUR SALES HOTLINE NOW ON (Charged at local rate)

0 3 4 5 4 1 3 3 4 8

For Free Information Pack and Details of this month's Special Offers

### INTRODUCING FIVE OF OUR TOP SELLING VEHICLES

#### DAIHATSU HIJET - FREEDOM

Extremely popular small M.P.V. cost effective, but can still carry one wheelchair passenger and four able-bodied passengers.



#### VW CARAVELLE

Ultimate flexibility best describes this multi purpose vehicle. A favourite buy for both individuals and organisations requiring a choice of seating options.



#### FIAT FIORINO

The cornerstone of the Universal stable built to our industries leading specification, this vehicle is price sensitive and our best seller year on year.



#### VAUXHALL COMBO

Offers increased choice for our customer. Super all round vision for the wheelchair passenger. Available in a number of base vehicle options.



**FULL RANGE OF  
DRIVING ADAPTATIONS  
FOR ALL OUR  
VEHICLES SUPPLIED  
AND FITTED.  
SWIVEL SEATS  
ALSO AVAILABLE**

#### FORD COURIER

Superb looking vehicle, well received by our customers carries one wheelchair passenger and four able-bodied passengers. Available with automatic gearbox.



Head Office: Jordans, Partridge Lane, Rusper, Sussex. RH12 4RW Tel: 01293 871019  
Works & Northern Office: Unit 2, Royd Mill, Dyehouse Lane, Brighouse. HD6 1LL Tel: 01484 400795

**NO NONSENSE VEHICLE CONVERSIONS**

# DisabilityNow

£1.60 August 1997

The award winning newspaper for everyone with an interest in disability

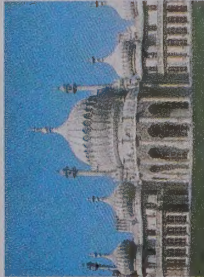
## DDA does the job

A sacked disabled factory worker took her bosses to an industrial tribunal – and won. *See page 1.*

Win  
summer  
outings  
for all the  
family

### CITY FOCUS

Does Brighton rock?



### ME AND MY PET

A woman's best friend



Reindeer in August? Sarah Gray, eight, meets an unseasonal friend, Charm the reindeer, at an open day for children with special needs at London Zoo.



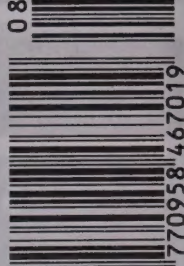
MICHAEL MELIA

## Regulars

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